TELOS

Number 47 Spring 1981

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a quarterly journal of radical thought

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One year individual	$18.00	One year institutional	$30.00
Two year individual	$36.00	Two year institutional	$60.00

Foreign subscribers, including those in Canada, must pay an additional 10 percent to cover handling and postage charges.

Available back issues: Nos. 13, 14, 17-46. Cost to individuals is $4.50 per copy each issue prior to No. 40; $5.00 each for No. 40 onward. Institutions pay $7.50 each for all back issues. Foreign orders add 10 percent to cover additional postage charges. No checks drawn on Canadian banks can be accepted. Out-of-print issues may be obtained through University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 USA.

Telos is published in the Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter. *Telos* No. 47 corresponds to Vol. 14, No. 1. Second class postage paid at St. Louis, Missouri. Address all correspondence to:

TELOS
Box 3111
St. Louis, MO 63130 USA

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ISSN 0090-6514

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Jean Bethke Elshtain teaches political science at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. A *Telos* editor, *Andrew Arato* is doing research at the Max-Planck-Institut für Sozialwissenschaften in Starnberg, West Germany. *Zygmunt Bauman* teaches sociology at the University of Leeds in England. *Antonio Carlo*, a regular *Telos* contributor and editor, teaches sociology at the University of Salerno, Italy. *Adam Michnick, Tadeusz Mazowiecki,* and *Kazimierz Wojcicki* are Polish intellectuals involved in various ways with Solidarity. *Kzrysztof Pomian* is also a Polish intellectual in exile in Paris. *Renate Damus* is a West German economist. *Ivan Svitak* is a Czech intellectual who now teaches philosophy at Chico State University in California. *Andrew Swidlicki* runs the Information Centre for Polish Affairs in London, England. *Georges Mink* is a researcher for CNRS and teaches in Paris. *Peter Engelmann* teaches philosophy at the University of Bremen, West Germany. *Bruno Bongiovanni* teaches history at the University of Turin, Italy. *John Keane* is a *Telos* editor and teaches sociology at the London Polytechnic in England. *Moishe Gonzales* teaches gastronomy at the University of Labrador. *Amedeo Vigorelli* teaches philosophy at the University of Milan, Italy. *John Alt*, former member of the St. Louis *Telos* group, now teaches sociology at SUNY at Cortland. *Flo Liebowitz* teaches philosophy at Oregon State University in Corvallis. *Barton Byg* teaches German and comparative literature in St. Louis. *David Gross* teaches history at the University of Colorado in Boulder. *Paul Harrison* teaches philosophy at La Trobe University in Melbourne, Australia. *Andrew McLaughlin* teaches philosophy at Lehman College in New York. *Eleni Mahaira-Odoni* teaches political science at Regis College in Boston.

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INTRODUCTION

Since recent events in Poland have thrust all of Eastern Europe into a major political crisis comparable in magnitude only to 1956 and 1968 — threatening to destabilize the already shaky existing international power relations — they have received a considerable amount of attention. But aside from the usual and, of course, justified ravings about the Russians' barbarity, sympathy for the Poles and the implicit support for already skyrocketing U.S. defense spending, the *originality* of the new developments has passed virtually unnoticed. Unlike Hungary in 1956, when a popular revolution sought to overthrow Soviet imperialism, or Czechoslovakia in 1968, when the Communist Party itself tried to reform the system from above — but in both cases remaining within the predominant logic of political discourse — in Poland there has been a *break* with that logic. There has been a successful attempt to redefine those rules of the game that previously allowed nothing but either catastrophic results or outright desperation. The successful effort in Poland to reconstitute civil society and use its autonomous institutions to checkmate state power at a pre-political level may open a new era in the history of socialism. By breaking with that logic of the Enlightenment, which had hitherto condemned socialism to a miserable extension of capitalist rationality with intensified brutality and little rationality, Poland may pave the way for a qualitatively new model of social organization.

The privileged status ascribed to the conceptual, objectified, frozen dimension at the expense of the lived experience that precedes it and is presupposed by it has resulted in a *political* framing of problems that, in overemphasizing form, misses content. Consequently, changes at that level alone have generally ended up enveloping the same old relations of domination in a new ideological garb which, however, makes their character all the more transparent and unbearable. Because of a peculiar configuration of historical circumstances, such as the strength of the Catholic church, the failure to collectivize agriculture, a traditional hatred for Russians, etc., Poland has been able to learn the lessons of 1956 and 1968. Thus, it is not a matter of outrightly overthrowing the party in power, since that would only result in Soviet intervention or perhaps civil war, nor is it a matter of reforming the party from within, as the Dubcek regime tried in Czechoslovakia. Rather, what is involved is an effort to reconstitute grassroots institutions whose strength makes the state more and more a formal shell ready to explode from within from the pressure of new social content, as Wojcicki describes it. If Poland is not occupied by Soviet troops in the near future, one of its historical meanings will have been to have dealt a decisive refutation to much of recent theoretical smoke coming out of Paris and seeking to recycle traditional Marxist categories and politics under the slogan of "the primacy of politics."

In the introductory essay, Arato, who along with Zukin and Zaslavsky put together most of the section on Poland, poses the key questions after having carefully reconstructed the historical and theoretical framework. The material in this special section falls roughly into three major categories: (1) articles by people directly involved in the events — some of whom have been arrested and who still are constantly subjected to harassment (such as Kuron and Michnik); (2) articles by Polish specialists in exile, such as Pomian, Bauman, and Swidlicki; and (3) analyses of various aspects of the crisis by outside specialists, such as Carlo, Damus, etc. These articles, combined with a series of interviews with Czechoslovak and Hungarian intellectuals, provide a general picture of the Polish events and their meaning.

In the regular section of the journal, Elshtain takes on the arguments of those feminists who advocate androgyny as a social ideal. It is claimed that, during a period

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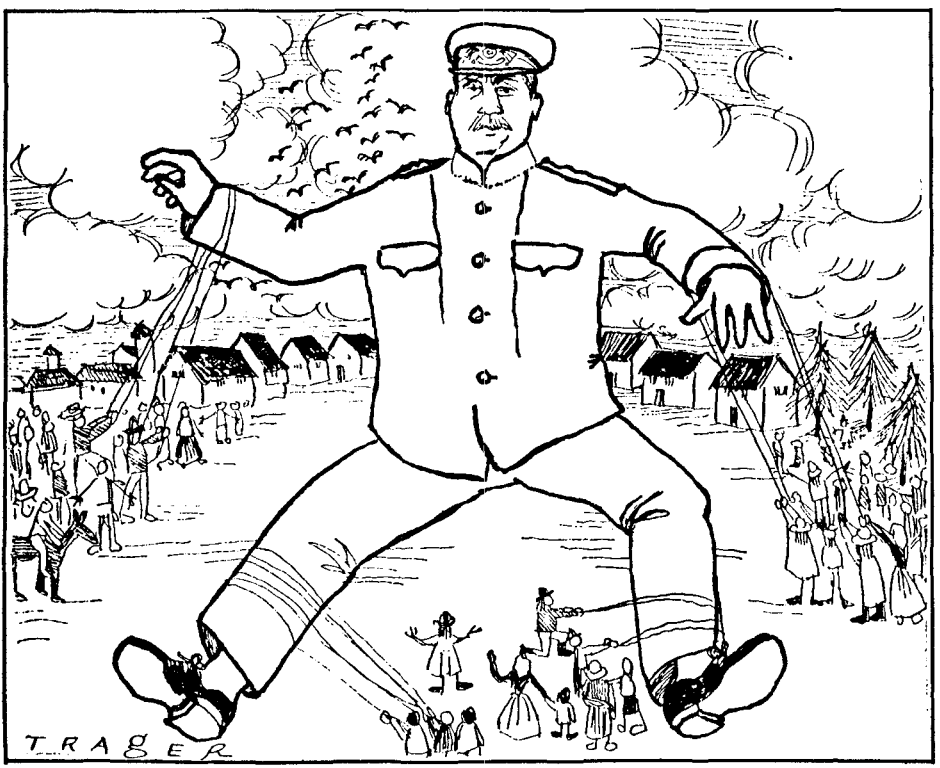
when feminists are under sustained attack from the right, the left should close ranks and mute internal criticism. But such a strategy is self-defeating and ultimately perpetuates internal weaknesses as well as preventing a reconsideration of what the left political project is all about. There is simply no substitute for clarity and intellectual honesty — especially when it hurts!

In a diversified "Notes and Commentaries" section, Bongiovanni recapitulates the work of Maximilian Rubel — an intellectual giant whose contributions have not received the attention they deserve and who has done more than any other scholar to encourage a rigorous study of Marx's works. In the same section, Keane takes on the recent fads marketed as the "new" history and shows it to be the same old nonsense, Gonzales reflects on the recent demise of *Marxist Perspectives* and some of its successors, and Vigorelli examines some aspects of French intellectual life. A student of Gouldner's, Alt pays tribute to his teacher and at the same time traces out a brilliant sociological career whose heritage we all share. Leibowitz, Byg and Elshtain close the section with a debate on the possible ideological appropriation of Vietnam and an analysis of the logic of Breines' gastronomy.

This issue is dedicated to David Carter Jones (8/1/55–2/5/80), a faithful *Telos* reader who recently passed away at the prime of his youth.

Last, Gabor Tomas Rittersporn has indicated unhappiness with the way footnote 39 of his article in *Telos* n. 46 was translated (or, in his words, "massacred"). For those pathologically curious readers familiar with Russian and French interested in finding out how the original text went, they can consult the French version in *Libre* 6 (1979).

Paul Piccone



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AGAINST ANDROGYNY

by Jean Bethke Elshtain

Although androgyny has become a pervasive feature in contemporary feminist discourse and is widely accepted as a model for a rational reordering of our presently inegalitarian sexual and social arrangements, the notion itself has rarely come in for systematic criticism.[1] It promises a shiny new world where human beings no longer exhibit "negative and distorted personality characteristics," where the "ideal androgynous being . . . could have no internal blocks to attaining self-esteem."[2] Yet, its near irresistibility requires explanation. Why is it that to be against androgyny leads one to be immediately branded as a "naturalist," an "essentialist," or even worse, a "sociobiologist," a "biological reductionist," or the representative of other obnoxious and reactionary viewpoints? The implication is that if one truly understood androgynist claims one would stop thrashing about in the darkness of gendered distortions and join up with the chorus of the future: Androgyny Now! If one refuses to join the chorus and rejects the various ready-made labels androgynists use to ignore their opponents, one must be prepared to make a case for an alternative vision of human psycho-sexual and social identity as one feature of a potentially emancipatory politics. Repudiating the ellide into degendered homogeneity, does not necessarily mean to reproduce our current, unacceptable sexual *division* and our structured sexual inequality.

Androgyny is an old term to which feminist discourse has given new life. In mythology, androgyny was the fusion of male and female, including secondary sexual characteristics, into a single being. This fusion was believed to exert an effeminizing influence, i.e., the female characteristics tended to "swamp" the male. The original androgyne, Hermaphrodite, son of Hermes and Aphrodite, is forced, against his will, into union with a female nymph. The nymph, overcome with desire, snares and literally insinuates herself into the unwilling Hermaphrodite until they are one flesh. According to May, "This vision of female power is one of the persistent threads in the idea of androgyny, at least as

1. There have been some doubters and critics but they have most often concentrated on but *one* feature or dimension of the androgynist argument. See, for example, Cynthia Secor, "Androgyny: An Early Reappraisal," *Women's Studies*, 2 (2), 1974, pp. 161-169; Daniel A. Harris, "Androgyny: The Sexist Myth in Disguise," in *ibid.*, pp. 171-184; Elaine Showalter, *A Literature of Their Own. British Women Novelists from the Brontës to Lessing* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), pp. 263-289; most recently, Robert May, *Sex and Fantasy. Patterns of Male and Female Development* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1980). Interestingly, radical feminism's leading theologian, Mary Daly, also rejects androgyny but for this reason: she wants her woman to be altogether free from any taint by the old man. See her essay, "The Qualitative Leap Beyond Patriarchal Religion," *Quest*, vol. 1, n. 4 (Spring, 1975), p. 229ff.

2. Ann Ferguson, "Androgyny as an Ideal for Human Development," in Mary Vetterling-Braggin, Frederick A. Elliston and Jane English, *Feminism and Philosophy* (Totowa, New Jersey: Littlefield, Adam and Co., 1977), pp. 45-69.

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seen through male eyes."[3] In the myth's original meaning, the concrete physical intermingling of male and female ushered into a re-union between these formerly separate, sexed beings, and this myth is part of a continuing tradition whose vagaries can be traced through diverse modes of historic representation.

The resurgence of the image of the androgyne throughout history is evocative and suggests that human beings have always been vexed with the existence of two clearly distinct sorts of being within the broader generic frame, human being. For some this differentness has been an occasion for celebration. For others, it is a concern and for a few a calamity. But human beings generally have fantasies, at one time or another, of sexual fusion, of "becoming" the "other," of wrenching free from the physical "constraint" or "limit" of being only one sex in one body. The seeds of envy are here, along with the seed-bed of narcissistic fantasies of grandiose limitlessness — of attaining what Freud called the "oceanic feeling," if necessary by eradicating the stubborn "other" embodied (quite literally) within the "opposite sex." Androgyny, then, is an ancient myth reflecting and refracting those human yearnings, urg fears and fantasies surrounding human embodiment.

But something happened to androgyny on its way to becoming feminist dogma. Human bodies disappeared — they were dismantled, dismembered or, at least, dis-remembered. Androgyny was dusted off, stripped of its deeply sensual and sexed roots and its previous mythic meaning. In place of the body, contemporary androgynists put "free will" or "flexible sex roles" or the "union of positively valued traits." Reaching back to androgyny's Greek roots, one feminist philosopher neatly disentangles the term from its mythological foundation and comes up with a tidy etymological derivation, as if the notion originated in a Greek version of Webster's New Abridged Dictionary. "The term 'androgyny,'" she writes, "has Greek roots: *andros* means man and gyne, *gyne*, woman. An androgynous person would combine some of each of the characteristic traits, skills, and interests that we now associate with stereotypes of masculinity and feminity."[4] Hermaphrodite and his lusting nymph give way to "the ideal androgynous being," one "who transcends those old categories in such a way as to be able to develop positive human potentialities. . . he or she would have no internal blocks to attaining self-esteem." "It is the flexibility and union of positively valued traits that is critical," writes another feminist literary critic.[5] For some androgynists, androgyny is deployed to knock down what they see as a conceptual prop for systemic sexual inequality in traditionalist presumptions that sexual differences have predetermined social outcomes. For most androgynists, however, androgyny is put forth primarily as a portrait of the ideal human being, one who has, along with the concrete physicality imbedded in the androgyne myth, sloughed off *all* "limiting" sexed definitions, biological and social: ". . . only androgynous people can attain the full human

3. May, *Sex and Fantasy, op.cit.*, p. 165.
4. Ferguson, *op.cit.*, pp. 45-46.
5. Carolyn Heilbrun, *Toward a Recognition of Androgyny* (New York: Knopf, 1973).

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potential possible given our present level of material and social resources.... Androgynous women would be just as assertive as men about their own needs in a love relationship.... Androgynous men would be more sensitive and aware.... They would be more concerned with the feelings of all people...."[6] Human beings in the here and now can partially succeed in transcending sexual gender. But the full achievement of an androgynous world is possible only with the total elmination of sex roles and the "disappearance...of any biological need for sex to be associated with procreation." At that fateful moment, "there would be no reason why such a society could not transcend sexual gender."[7]

A vision of pure positivity emerges: an ideal, all-purpose, abstract person with all nastiness expunged, bodilyness removed, and differences (which might be points of fruitful tension, debate, or just interest) eliminated. The androgyne is non-specific with reference to social location; he or she is "at home" anywhere, is free-floating with reference to all traditional loci of human identity. A feminist sociologist, writing on "The Androgynous Life," suggests as her ideal person one who "combines characteristics usually attributed to men with characteristics usually attributed to women."[8] The road to positive androgyny requires the elimination by fiat of any negative irritants in the image. Feminist psychologist Judith M. Bardwick sees the androgyne as the next mental health "ideal." In the feminist future, the "healthy" individual will be the androgynous man or woman. "We would then expect both nurturance and competence, openness and objectivity, compassion and competitiveness from both women and men, as individuals, according to what they are doing."[9]

A second feminist psychologist, working within a behavior modification framework, reports that androgyny "does not lie in some far-off feminist future. Androgyny is here. The research findings tell us so."[10] Androgyny is already with us, it turns out, because "sex is an easy and obvious independent variable." Abstractly predefining sex as the "*assignment*" an obstetrician makes at birth "on the basis of genitalia" (as if this were a contingent and arbitrary matter), the voice of behaviorism finds it clear that sex "is primarily...a social fact not a biological fact."[11] We exhibit sex differences, or there are sex differences, she claims, because people *believe* there are sex differences and act accordingly. Were it not for this stubborn belief, and the

6. Ferguson, "Androgyny as Ideal," *op.cit.*, pp. 62-63.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 65.
8. Caroline Bird, *Born Female* (New York: Pocket Books, 1968), p. xi.
9. Judith M. Bardwick, "Androgyny and Humanistic Goods, or Goodbye, Cardboard People," in *The American Woman: Who Will She Be?*, ed. Mary Louise McBee and Kathryn N. Blake (Beverly Hills, California: Glencoe Press, 1974), p. 61. Bardwick's formulation is an open invitation to a new and terrible form of social engineering. There are dangers implicit in any normative ideal of mental health but hers, couched as it is, as the most perfect, most rational, most *healthy* possible would exert terrible pressure on real, unrecalcitrant human "material." For a discussion of American feminism's long links with, among others, the social engineering impulse, see William Leach, *True Love and Perfect Union. The Feminist Reform of Sex and Society* (New York: Basic Books, 1980).
10. Kathleen E. Grady, "Androgyny Reconsidered," in Juanita H. Williams, ed., *Psychology of Women. Selected Readings* (new York: W.W. Norton, 1979), pp. 172-177.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 174.

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sexist practices it shores up or that rise on the basis of it, "It seems clear that given the same social situation, the same reinforcement contingencies, the same expectancies, both sexes will react similarly." Finally, she notes "it is always satisfying to strike down another sex difference."[12] Having struck them all down by fiat, she proclaims us to be in the androgynist future though it is a pity most of us seem unaware of it yet.

Feminist literary scholars seem to find the androgynous myth particularly compelling as the depiction of the ideal artist and the perfect creative mind. As Virginia Woolf writes: "If one is a man, still the woman part of the brain must have effect; and a woman also must have intercourse with the man in her. Coleridge perhaps meant this when he said that a great mind is androgynous. It is when this fusion takes place that the mind is fully fertilized and uses all its faculties."[13] Some critics who celebrate the Bloomsbury group, of which Woolf was a member, as uniquely creative, attribute "this enormous intellectual and artistic productivity" to living the androgynous life.[14]

Androgyny advocates agree that the achievement of a fully androgynous society requires major reconstruction of the human subject. For some, an enlightened androgynous vanguard can move ahead right now to lead androgynous lifes. But for society to become truly androgynous, for a world in which one's sexuality is as "innocuous as current reactions to hair color," some sort of social revolution which will bring forth reconstructed androgynous human subjects is required.

A fairly innocuous, simplistic version of the thesis of androgyny as the goal of feminist political ideology is featured in Yates' "androgynous paradigm" which "represents a women- and men-equal-to-each-other view.... It holds that tasks, values, and behavior traditionally assigned to one sex or the other should be shared by them both...."[15] Yates claims the "androgynous mode" as "the operating paradigm" is "the most revolutionary of the concepts informing the new wave of feminism.... It suggests that men should be equal to women as well as women equal to men.... The androgynous position offers a model of cooperation and of rationality."[16] Firestone, on the other hand, offers the extreme androgynous apocalypse as cultural revolution with "the reintegration of the Male (Technological Mode) with the Female (Aesthetic Mode), to create an androgynous culture surpassing the highs of either cultural stream, or even of the sum of their integrations. More than a marriage, rather an abolition of the cultural categories themselves, a mutual cancellation — a matter-antimatter explosion, ending with a poof! culture itself. We shall not miss it.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 176.
13. Quoted in Showalter, *A Literature of Their Own, op.cit.*, p. 287.
14. Gayle Graham Yates, *What do Women Want. The Ideas of the Movement* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), p. 122. Of course, Woolf, finally, didn't live it, she died it, and Elaine Showalter argues that androngyny was Woolf's way of dealing with feelings that were "too hot to handle" that, finally, androgyny became a form of repression, "an escape from the confrontation with femaleness and maleness." Showalter, *A Literature of Their Own, op.cit.*, pp. 286, 289.
15. Yates, *What do Women Want, op.cit.*, p. 19.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 117.

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We shall no longer need it. . . ."[17] Though not all feminists explicitly adopt visions of an androgynous world, many embrace milder, implicit versions of the androgyny agenda with arguments for the total elimination of all "sex roles" (as if every activity in which a male or female engaged could be pared down to a "role," an abstract sociological construct, and thereby readily eliminated by socio-political fiat) and the achievement of a society in which all "roles" are freely exchanged and no one is tied, in any way, to a role that reflects gender identity or definition (if indeed such persists at all).

What androgyny offers — or seems to — to its feminist adherents is, first, an ideal of what human beings can become once they break the bonds of overly restrictive sexed definitions and, second, a vision of an egalitarian future in which all forms of sexual domination and inequality, now buttressed, they argue, by beliefs concerning "natural" sex differences will have been quite overcome and, finally, a vision of the artist and the creative individual as one who has transcended the muck of matter and attained a purity of thought and expression within the rarified ideal of androgyny. All this — and more — is pegged on a term that falls wholly outside the frame of political discourse as the stock of common, if not wholly agreed-upon, notions available to social participants when they act politically. Androgyny does not arouse political debate and public challenge in the way calls for social justice of equality can, and do. Indeed, part of androgyny's appeal must be the promise it holds forth for a brave new world attained, somehow, through human beings rationally and freely willing to have done with the sexed-old and to embrace the degendered-new, with the androgynous vanguard, through the force of example and a superior "lifestyle," leading the way.

Beyond androgynists' explicit commitments there are a number of unacknowledged presumptions imbedded within androgynous discourse which help to account, first, for why this "new" notion of androgyny "caught on" and remains a standard feature in much feminist thought and, second, for where the androgynists ought to be "located" within a wider frame of discursive practices and theoretical traditions. There are two broad features that move implicitly through various androgynists evocations. Both locate androgynist discourse securely within the boundaries of classical liberal thought. First, *all* androgynists propound as an article of faith, an example of right reason, and an instance of scientific truth that human nature is more or less plastic. Writes an androgynist philosopher, "it seems. . .plausible to assume that human nature is plastic and moldable. . . ."[18] More correctly, she should have observed this "seems plausible" if one operates within a framework of liberal environmentalism. That this is where the androgynists implicitly locate themselves becomes clear when this plasticity is questioned, for the interlocutor is slotted into a fixed, static "essentialist" posture that reflects perfectly one of the received antinomies of liberal discourse. A picture of the human being as Silly Putty or a Blank Slate goes under the contemporary name "sex-role

17. Shulamith Firestone, *The Dialectic of Sex* (new York: Bantam Books, 1972), p. 190.
18. Ferguson, *op.cit.*, p. 62.

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socialization theory" or, sometimes, "social learning theory." The view is that children acquire their patterns of behavior through a process of external reinforcements. Sex-role behavior is maintained by these same external forces. As these forces change, or reinforcements alter, different "behaviors" will be reinforced and called forth.[19]

Even feminist critics of some versions of the androgynist thesis call upon environmental determinism to buttress the case for their own alternative. For example: a philosopher who questions what she calls "monoandrogynism" (the adoption of a single, uniform androgynist standard for all, though even that is preferable, she says, to what we now have) and opts for an alternative she dubs "polyandrogynism (in which more options would be open to individuals along masculine-feminine boundaries or markers) reaffirms that human beings are totally products of their external environment. This means the only question for her is: which version of androgynism, given that each alternative androgynous society will socialize people either to make everyone androgynous in one way or to help everyone make themselves androgynous in a number of ways, "is preferable for a hypothetical future society."[20]

The thesis that people are blank slates, totally molded by external pressures, makes the androgynous project sound feasible. One creates the androgynous society and gets the ideal androgynous "product." (Of course it is not easy to square the commitment to a prescriptive environmentalism with the robust androgynist voluntarism also embraced by some, an elite who have reconstructed themselves showing others the way.) The presumption is that males and females are, "for all reasonable intents and purposes alike. Differences between them. . . are chiefly due to culture and conditioning."[21] This means that by eliminating the force of present social conditioning what will be liberated is not diverse human potentialities but human homogeneities! Millett declares that ". . . the sexes are inherently in everything alike, *save* reproductive systems, secondary sexual characteristics, orgasmic capacity, and genetic and morphological structure."[22] Her argument that we treat sexual reproduction, male and female sexual responsivity, the entire complex structure of our genetic inheritance together with our morphological characteristics as trivial, uninteresting and unimportant facts about ourselves is an apt instance of one of the androgynists opening moves: to cancel out the significance of human sexual differences, in advance of launching any inquiry or making sustained arguments, by treating sexual identity as an arbitrary, external and contingent phenomena.

This leads to the second major fulcrum which "moves" within androgynist thinking, i.e., the expressed conviction that the body is a prison, a constraint,

19. See Chapter 6, "Classic Theories of Sex-Role Socialization," in *Women and Sex Roles: A Social-Psychological Perspective* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1978), pp. 95-113.

20. Joyce Trebilcot, "Two Forms of Androgynism," in *Feminism and Philosophy, op.cit.*, p. 74.

21. Elizabeth H. Wolgast, *Equality and the Rights of Women* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1980), p. 125.

22. Kate Millett, *Sexual Politics* (New York: Doubleday, 1969), p. 93. Emphasis added.

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an unacceptable limitation from which human beings must be liberated and which they will eventually "transcend." If the body is a prison for androgynists, the female body is life imprisonment with torture to boot. One finds repeated expressions of contempt for the female body.[23] Those who are not contemptuous are often merely dismissive of the body or they reduce its complex richness as a human standpoint in the world with statements about "biological disadvantages," for the female, her "role in biological reproduction."[24] Steps must be taken to erase all these biological disadvantages, all the limitations which inhere in sexual identity. The need to hold the body at arm's length and to view embodiment as a trap and a straight jacket is clear.[25]

Androgynists, then, adopt two tacit presuppositions: (1) They treat the human body reductionistically as "nothing but . . ." or "no more than . . ." and *must* see, within the iron cage of their liberal dualism, those who question their rigidity as themselves rigid "essentialists" or "naive naturalists"; thus they evade the possibility that human beings may have a "nature" of some sort that is not exhausted with reference to the social forces that have impinged upon it. This feature of the androgynist perspective places its proponents squarely within classical liberal discourse. For androgynists, the world revolves around a series of pure opposites: pure freedom vs. total determinism, nature vs. nurture, reason vs. passion, mind vs. body, and so on. (2) They embrace a thorough-going environmentalist determinism as the only sure and secure avenue to human "reconstruction" along androgynist lines. In the androgynist new world, because the right kinds of reinforcers will be present, human beings will exhibit all and only the positive traits of the other. Given their dualist starting point, in which other minds can exist only by inference or analogy, one is presented with the image of an aggregate of androgynes, complete unto themselves and, like *homo economicus* in liberal contract theory, the androgyne is a being fundamentally unchanged by any human relation. For when one reaches the stage of pure androgynous positivity, where no negative intrudes to create friction ("no internal blocks"), and where one lives in a world populated only by other positivities, there can be nothing like a determinate negation anytime, anywhere. At this fateful juncture, social being and social consciousness will have become one. There will be nothing for the dialectic to work on or work through: no rough edges, no unseemly spots, no lines or ruptures, nor points of friction through which doubt, questioning, negation

23. See, for example, Firestone's "pregnancy is barbaric" with cruel children pointing fingers and sneering, "Who's the fat lady?" Or, alas, even Simone de Beauvoir who, following Sartre, launches volleys against the female body as being "wanting in significance by itself" though the male body has its own integrity and "makes sense." Woman is portrayed as "the victim of the species." Pregnancy is described as "alienation" and, with no apparent awareness of what she is up to, de Beauvoir calls a woman's breasts "mammary glands" that "play no role in woman's individual economy: they can be excised at any time of life." See Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans. H.M. Parshley (New York: Bantam Books, 1968), pp. xvi, 24.

24. Ferguson, "Androgyny as Ideal," *op.cit.*, p. 52.

25. The most straightforward creation of a utopian society based upon contempt for the body and an urge to transcend it remains Plato's *Republic*.

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might erupt.

A case against androgyny can be made in terms of what is required for human beings to locate themselves spatially and temporally within a natural and social world. When we take the human body as a starting point we locate a corporeal entity of a particular kind within a complex world. From birth this entity is implicated in relations with others. What Freud once called the "momentous and fateful" prolonged dependency of human infants on adult others is assumed embodiment, for children are born as helpless and totally dependent embodied beings. The human body is part of the material reality of nature: we experience that world Schutz calls "paramount reality" (both "inner" and "outer") in and through our bodies. Within the sphere or daily human life, "the individual locates himself as a body, as operating physically in the world, and as meeting the resistance of fellow men as well as of things."[26] The starting point of each and every human being is his or her particular *location in space and time; this is, inescapably, the body.*

That a social theorist must defend the universally true proposition that human beings can experience the world only in and through their bodies attests to the continued sway of the dualisms inherent in the psychological principles which flow from classical liberal thought.[27] If the androgynists' implicit denials or explicit repudiations of human embodiment were spelled out, the claims would go something like his: (1) personal identity (that which I am) is entirely distinct from my body, (2) the body cannot be said to "know," nor can it serve as a vehicle for, or mediator of, knowledge, (3) the only genuine "I" is a rational ego which is analytically distinct from that embodiment to which it enjoys a contingent relation. The implication would be that to specify biological features of human existence, and to draw these into the frame of an over-all account of human indentity is to slide, irrevocably, into some sort of universalist, totalist, or ontological trap. In this way, through such evasions, debate on these matters is quashed. Those who argue "my body, my self," and insist upon incorporating biological imperatives into a comprehensive account of the human subject are labeled, within the androgynist frame, as embracing the notion that there are rigid, fixed "innate" givens in human nature that appear invariantly and identically in all times and in all places.[28] This is palpable nonsense but it is understandable and convenient nonsense. It enables androgynists to avoid engaging their strongest opponents and it reaffirms various antinomies — freedom vs. determinism, innate vs. social, heredity vs. environment, biological explanation vs. social explanation — as mutually exclusive alternatives.

To break-down and through the rigidities implicit in androgynism one can begin by asking, simply, what having a relationship which persists over time requires. In order for a relationship to persist for a single day, or even one hour, each party to that relationship must have a continuing identity, must perceive

26. Alfred Schutz, *Collected Papers,* vol. 1 (The Hague: Martinus Nimhoff, 1962), p. xlii.
27. Roberto Mangabeira Unger, *Knowledge and Politics* (New York: Free Press, 1972), p. 55.
28. May, *Sex and Fantasy, op.cit.,* p. 80.

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herself as acting and speaking in and through a body which situates her and from which she moves, sees, acts, and can be held accountable for her actions.[29] She must also perceive of the other as a being with similar temporal continuity, one with whom she shares a common humanity for he, like she, occupies space in the temporal world. The solipsism implicit in classical liberal personality theory cannot account for real relations between persons, for it is not able to recognize others as beings like oneself save by analogy and inference. The recognition of the humanity of the other is not, in itself, sufficient to constitute a persisting relationship. For that to happen personal identity over time must hold.

There could be no social relations if each person began each day as if it were their first: if individuals lacked memories tied to a sense of self as persisting over time and in space. Memory requires a *particular* history of having lived, as a body, in a social world. Human action turns on such considerations as well. These dimensions of personal identity are part of a human, and thus social, context of which a human, and bodily, subject is the basis. The only way we can know that the same person is in the body, whether our own or some other's, at different times is if we grasp persistence over time.[30] Another essential feature which makes human relationship possible is language. It allows us to differentiate and to classify reality so that we can identify more or less constant subjects and objects of reference. Through language we may single out a particular so-and-so as the same so-and-so, one who may share certain properties in common with some larger, generic grouping but he is, as well, a unique individual with such-and-such properties.[31]

If bodily identity as one feature of spatio-temporal persistence is an inescapable feature of the human condition, is the division of humanity into two distinct sexes an essential and important, or a contingent and relatively trivial aspect of this identity? Males and females, of course, are beings who share in the most basic general characteristics; yet they differ along recognizable and distinctive lines. To introduce the sex distinction is not to surreptitiously inject considerations of gender at this point in the argument. To insist that "my body, myself" are temporally and spatially defined, and that this body will either be a male or female body, says nothing in itself about what we call "masculine" or "feminine" identities or psychologies. In androgynous discourse, remember, the presumption is that the sex distinction *itself* can and must be transcended or eliminated (at least in maximalist statements of androgyny); that human beings can somehow "return to a state of nature and to an innocent eye" and start to build up language and culture all over again, junking all inherited forms, particularly those grounded in the differentiation between the sexes. This is problematic because important distinctions, like male and female, are not only imbedded in language, they are constitutive of a way of life. To see basic notions as simply or purely arbitrary and contingent is

29. Stuart Hampshire, *Thought and Action* (new York: Viking Press, 1959), pp. 54-85.
30. Unger, *Knowledge and Politics, op.cit.*, p. 57.
31. Hampshire, *Thought and Action, op.cit.*, pp. 11-12, 20, 31.

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to trash centuries of human concern, fear, desire, denial, passion, rage, joy, longing, hope and despair in a fit of ahistorical hubris. For human beings do not make distinctions nor draw visions about the most basic things — sexuality, birth, life, death — in wholly capricious ways, but to certain vital ends and purposes. To presume one can simply blur or obliterate even the most fundamental distinction between human beings presumes a great deal.

If one agrees that the sex distinction is ineliminable and important, does this mean one simply acquiesces in received notions of "masculinity" and "feminity"? Clearly not. To determine whether or not the claim that bodily identity is a feature of personal identity implies that a sexed identity, maleness or femaleness, is also necessarily linked with bodily identity, we must turn to a developmental account of the human subject. The human subject is a creation, an emergent from a developmental process over time, in history. Androgynous arguments, notoriously, omit *any* coherent developmental account of the human subject. This is explainable in part by the indebtedness of androgynists to liberal notions of abstract individuals. But there is another reason: androgyny is primarily, in most instances exclusively, focused on adult males and females. Children, save as so much raw material to be molded into future androgynes, are missing from the picutre. It is far easier to speak of "mere biology" or "transcending sex roles" if one ignores birth, infancy, and childhood development.

The developmental account owes much to Freud's theory of human development as a dynamic, ineluctably biological and social process. For Freud the human body "registers itself" through a complex inner-outer dialectic in which the human infant makes internal representations to itself of its own body. This account is a powerful theoretical alternative to dualist, solipsistic, environmentally deterministic, and exclusively ontological notions of the subject.[32] The argument goes roughly like this: from its first moments the infant experiences its own body as a source of pleasure and unpleasure. This goes beyond the registering of sensations of hunger, pain, or pleasure. It implicates the infant as an active not a merely passive being, in the construction of an inner world through the literal "taking in" of its own body's surface as part of a wider "external" reality. Given this process, the human "I," the self, is always, importantly, an embodied "I." The infant simply does not have the cognitive or neurological structure and organization to make clear distinctions between inner and outer, internal and external. But the infant does "take in" with eyes, ear, mouth, and touch that "external" world. Slowly, the "I" is built up in part through complex representations of the child's body, "inner" and "outer," and the bodies of others with whom the child is implicated in

32. See Freud's discussion over the confusion between biological, psychological, and social meanings of "masculinity" and "feminity." From the beginning, Freud adhered to a theory of biological and psychological bisexuality. See Sigmund Freud, "Hysterical Phantasies and Their Relation to Bisexuality" (1980); *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, particularly the long footnote added in 1915; the elegant and powerful essay, "A Child is Being Beaten" (1919) in which Freud demonstrates the internal connection between children's beating fantasies and the "bisexual constitution of human beings."

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exquisitely social relations from the start. The surface of the child's body is from the first "a place from which both external and internal perceptions may spring. It is *seen* like any other object, but to the *touch* it yields two sorts of sensations, one of which may be equivalent to an internal perception. The "I," then, is "first and foremost a *bodily ego*: it is not merely a surface entity, but is itself the projection of a surface."[33]

Our corporeality bears powerful imperatives for how we come to know. The fact that our knowing is essentially tied to our experiences of ourselves as bodies means that the mind and its activities must be conceived in a manner that is "tinged with spatiality." "We are at home in our mind somewhat as in a body," argues Wollheim.[34] The corporeal ego plays a vital role in the child's epistemic constitution of his or her identity. A child can neither physically negate nor conceptually transcend the manner in which his or her body "registers itself," and that body must be understood within the terms of each successive stage of psycho-sexual maturation. The particular meeting of mind-body which emerges from this developmental theory is no chance encounter but involves powerful imperatives. The child evokes the body and its processes as he or she learns. The body involves and mediates ways of knowing. It is neither a substanceless structure, nor a hollow shell, nor inert matter to which no meaning can be imputed or applied. Our most original experiences must be understood with reference to an embodied engagement with the world.

Nothing so far demands that the "I" conceive of itself as belonging to one gender or another from the start; indeed, no such differentiation is possible until the child begins what Freud calls its early "sexual researches."[35] Certainly, by the time the child is five or six, if not before, he or she will have distinguished two "types" of bodily-sexed beings, though the child often remains uncertain as to the meaning of this distinction and confused on how to make determinations in specific cases. To live in a sexed, social universe is not, necessarily, to inhabit a world in which differential evaluations are placed on "maleness" or "femaleness."[36]

Gender identity, a notion of masculinity and femininity or maleness and femaleness, is one feature in the child's identity formation as he or she enters puberty and young adulthood and, simultaneously, a more complex social world. Children locate themselves in that world on the basis of gender; children seek some measure of security in these matters for they are of pre-eminent concern and urgency to them. Rosenthal observes that when Dante

33. Sigmund Freud, *The Ego and the Id* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1970), p. 16.

34. Richard Wollheim, "The Mind and the Mind's Image of Itself," in *On Art and the Mind* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), p. 53.

35. Whether Freud is correct that the distinction between male and female does not become fully entrenched until the genital stage of development or some of his critics are correct that the "certainty" of one's gender occurs earlier is not important in order to make the point that boys and girls experience the surfaces of their bodies as a feature of "external" reality which is taken in and represented intrapsychically in somewhat different ways.

36. Richard Wollheim, "Psychoanalysis and Feminism," *New Left Review*, n. 93, p. 64. Wollheim argues that gender identification begins earlier than Freud's account would indicate. But this gender identification still occurs before any full-blown notions of "masculine" and "feminine" develop.

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wishes to imagine persons in hell he imagines them as deprived of the security of the knowledge that "one is a man, if one is one, or that one is a woman, if one is one." She continues: "To have outlines and insides that — for oneself and others — *fluctuate dangerously* is to be in hell."[37] For androgynists, the child's concerns are construed as a behavioral response to environmental stimuli exclusively, thus denying the child his or her own integrity as a self-constituting, embodied subject. Androgynists claim that it is possible to achieve *psychological* androgyny or non-differentiation along markers of maleness and femaleness, as well as "masculinity" and "feminity," wihout positing bodily identity as a prior condition. This surely begs the issue. For what androgynists must figure out is how to prevent the child from becoming intensely interested in his or her own body and the bodies of others similar to yet different from himself or herself. The child lives out a deep sense of urgency in and through his or her body — is it whole? is it strong? is it attractive? will it grow? am I sick? am I the "right" kind of boy-girl? — will be unmoved by appeals to transcend or eliminate the importance of gender for that is precisely what he or she is trying to figure out, work on, and work through.

In the final analysis, however, even the urge to eliminate concerns with gender, to try to institute a human condition in which human beings do not care what "biological sex" they or anybody else may be, in which the distinction between males and females has ceased to be a central and interesting feature of human life is incoherent and impossible short of the mutation of human beings.

What would a world in which sex distinctions were ignored or denied look like? First, it would be an inchoate muddle for maleness and femaleness (that is, our corporeal sexed selves) *are* our ways of experiencing the world. In Winch's words: ". . . masculinity or feminity are not just *components* in . . . life, they are its *mode*."[38] (Winch here refers to male and female as human sexed identity, not to social and cultural notions of the masculine and the feminine.) Second, it would be a hypocritical world of lies and denials. Repression of infantile sexuality would have to go far beyond anything we have known. Children would have to be surveilled night and day in order that any moves to touch, look at, sniff, or play with their bodies could be prohibited and deflected. Only in this way could one forestall the child's inner representations of the surface of its body. Of course, psychic representations of inner drives and states would continue, but the child would be forbidden to see or touch its own or other bodies. Children would be barraged with the insistence that any differences they discovered, despite efforts to preclude childish sexual researches, did not matter, were of no interest, and were inessential aspects of human life. Not only would this be a cruel deception, it would hamper the development of the self which is grounded in the child's ability to differentiate objects, things, and events along lines of what is important. For a child such distinctions include

37. Abigail Rosenthal, "Feminism Without Contradictions," *Monist,* vol. 57, n. 1, p. 29.
38. Peter Winch, "Understanding a Primitive Society," in Bryan R. Wilson, ed., *Rationality* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1970), p. 110.

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big-small, family-not family, pleasure-unpleasure, my body-other bodies, male-bodies, female bodies.[39] The first great problem which exercises the child concerns his or her body and the bodies of others. Should parents suppress these "burning question(s)" they will damage the child's "genuine instinct of research" and "begin to erode his confidence in his parents."[40]

The rigid suppression of knowledge of sex distinctions or the denial of their importance would undermine the moral order and erode social life. The category of the serious and the less serious is, as Bernard Williams points out, "itself a moral category, and that it is itself a moral criticism to say of somebody that he is regarding a serious issue as trivial or a trivial issue as serious."[41] Those who regard the serious issue of the real, not fantasized, distinctions between the sexes as a trivial issue which the androgynist revolution will eliminate are engaged in a form of abstracted and wishful thinking that posits free-floating pictures as genuine human alternatives. Such pictures ignore social forms and the many-layered complexity of the persons who live in and through them, who *must* live in and through them. History is in some sense both a *physical* and a *psychological* category for, as Hegel insisted, historical accounts by human beings are "about claims to operate with one's body in definite relations."[42] In Showalter's words: "The androgynous mind is...a utopian projection of the ideal artist: calm, stable, unimpeded by consciousness of sex...like other utopian projections, her vision is inhuman. Whatever else one may say of androgyny, it represents an escape from the confrontation with femaleness and maleness."[43]

The androgynist might respond to these charges by insisting that a notion of psychological androgyny need not *ignore* distinctions between the sexes; it simply holds forth the possibility that these distinctions, assimilated to sex roles, a sexual division of labor, and inequality between the sexes, can be muted, disregarded, or become irrelevant insofar as the social world is concerned and insofar as the development of a psychologically androgynous individual is concerned. These are separate and distinct claims. Consider the notion of the "psychologically androgynous" individual. The claim goes like this: without forcing children to ignore their bodies, or the differences between male and female bodies, it is possible through intensive, overt intervention on the part of "socializers" to downplay sex-differences as an *important* distinction between persons. It is, in other words, possible to resist gender identification without deploying the repressive measures previously indicated as needed in order to create children who view sex distinctions as inessential and not terribly interesting characteristics of self and others.

39. Sigmund Freud, "Analysis of a Phobia in a Five Year Old Boy," *Standard Edition* (X, 1909) p. 7.
40. Sigmund Freud, "The Sexual Enlightenment of Children," *Standard Edition* (IX, 1907), p. 136.
41. Bryan Magee, ed., *Modern British Philosophy*, "Conversation with Bernard Williams: Philosophy and Morals" (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1971), p. 154.
42. Rosenthal, "Feminism Without Contradictions," *op.cit.*, p. 40.
43. Showalter, *A Literature of Their Own, op.cit.*, p. 289.

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The problem with this claim is that it is grounded in no explanatory account of child development which incorporates both theoretical and empirical dimensions, offers no historic examples, has no base in ordinary language, is buttressed by no clinical evidence: it is a purely abstract claim, repeated rhetorically and pronounced *a priori* without reference to actual, historically situated human beings. The motive force behind this utopian ideal appears to be a fantasy of the indistinguishability or interchangeability of selves, a wish to return to an undifferentiated state of symbiotic oneness with others or with *an* other. In Secor's terms, the notion of androgyny is that of a person "devoid of context."[44] The process of growing up involves breaking away from such a symbiotic fusion. Only then does the child begin his or her own psychic life. Urges to return to a condition of non-individuation are the "projection into the future of a totally regressive urge."[45] This makes of androgyny a "limiting and probably reactionary concept."[46] Visions that require that we abandon the distinctions, differences, separations and divisions essential to any coherent identity and existence are portraits of epistemic confusion and abstract ahistoricity.

Nothing has been claimed thus far — that bodily identity is a necessary feature of personal identity and that personal identity is necessarily a sexual or sexed identity — that either presupposes, entails, or buttresses the continued social and political inequality between the sexes. The sex distinctions of a biological or psychological nature which have been linked historically to inequality between the sexes are not necessarily thus linked. Will inequality always turn on, or require, positing alleged differences between the sexes which then serve both as the "reason for" and the "justification of" inegalitarian outcomes? Although sex distinctions have served as a justification for sex inequality in the past, these differences, to the extent that they are not relevant to the distinctions being made, need not serve this function in the future. That is a matter for political struggle. Indeed, the argument that some putative "sameness" or blending of identities between males and females is the *only* safe and secure foundation for social equality has the precise effect of displacing a poltical focus upon structures of inequality in favor of advancing abstract rhetorical claims about the personalities of persons.

Androgyny as a social and political ideal is confused. Its proponents offer no coherent account of the androgynous society nor how we are to achieve one. More importantly, when androgyny touches upon or alludes to certain worthy political ideals and principles, these ideals and principles are more coherently and powerfully couched in a political language which is already a feature of political debate and life. Androgyny as a social imperative tends to get conflated with "role sharing" and with the simplistic notion of each sex exhibiting characteristics stereotypically held of the other. Thus women would compete in the marketplace for the rewards of the society, men would do

44. Cynthia Secor, "Androgyny," *op.cit.*, p. 163.

45. Tony Tanner, "Julie and 'La Maison Paternelle': Another Look at Rousseau's La Nouvelle Heloise," *Daedalus* (Winter, 1976), p. 40.

46. Secor, "Androgyny," *op.cit.*, p. 163.

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household tasks, etc. But androgyny as a social category ultimately fails to come to grips with the realities of a world which denies to a majority of its men and women those social goods which characterize the lives of the privileged. Androgyny forces attention back on the blurring or merging of sexual characteristics and diverts attention away from the categories of *class* and *race* as determinants of the social positions of large numbers of male and female participants within American society.[47] Androgyny can neither help to forge, nor even identify, collective movements for social change. Finally, androgynism rests on the proposition that the "problem" for women lies in the relations which pertain between men and women.

Androgyny, like any term of discourse with a long history, is located in the web of its traditional mythic and symbolic meanings; thus it cannot serve, not now and not in the future, as a politically resonant cry for social change in the way, say, "liberation" or "equality," two powerful terms of *political* discourse imbedded within a net of political meanings, can. No movement for social change will be fought under the banner "androgyny" but many have been and will be waged under the banners "freedom," "equality," "liberty," "peace." The feminist thinker who would articulate a theory of social change which may also serve as concrete historical analysis recognizes that equality, unlike androgyny, is a concept with common, shared social and political meanings. It can serve as a weapon to put pressure upon social practices and institutions in a way that androgyny, lacking this critical "purchase" cannot.[48] Arguments for equality of respect and treatment are more securely lodged in the insistence by the political thinker that there are characteristics and qualities all persons *qua* persons share. To state this does not require denying that there are important and vital differences between persons, as groups and individuals, as well. To assert equality as a statement about persons can be deployed as a powerful wedge to press for more egalitarian arrangements. This presumption forces the analyst, if he or she contends that all persons are equal to one another in the most important respects with reference to their shared social universe, but finds that inequality in treatment exists, to look to those structures implicated in such differences in treatment. The qualities we all share as sentient creatures who have a capacity to suffer, to feel pain, to experience joy, to possess moral capacities, and so on, override, for purposes of pressing for social equality, those other characteristics not shared by all.[49] There is a dignity, as well as a political resonance to this argument; on both scores, androgynism will forever

47. Barbara Charlesworth Gelpi, "The Politics of Androgyny," *Women's Studies* (2), 1974, pp. 151-160.

48. "Equality" is an intersubjective notion; "androgyny" is not. Intersubjective meanings are ways of experiencing action in society which are expressed in common language, rooted in social institutions, practices, and relations and which serve to constitute those very institutions, practices and relations.

49. Certain immediate questions arise which, for the most part political theorists and moral philosophers have ignored, namely, what about those human beings of whom one cannot assert the full range of what constitutes humans-as-such, provided one adopts the notion. I think of the severely retarded, for example. One could build a case for their having moral claims on others by virtue of the fact that, although they may not be capable of rational thought, dear to the heart of Western philosophers, they certainly can feel pain and experience affection.

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fall short.

This tour through the inner workings of androgyny and its implications suggest some modest conclusions. The first is that we would all be better off, as well as much closer to creating a world to our heart's desiring, if we accepted our bodies, in better grace and recognized that a *sexual difference* is neither an affront, nor an outrage, nor a narcissistic injury. A *sexual division*, on the other hand, one that separates the sexes and locks each into a vector of isolated, alienated activity *is* both a deep wound to the psycho-sexual identity of the human subject as well as a specific damage of an overly rigidified system of stratification and specialization. In order to fight the destructiveness of the system of sexual division, one must be able to say that the body is good and that a recognition and acceptance of sex differences makes us all richer, not poorer; that these differences enhance rather than constrict our world. The androgynist assault on human sexed identities bespeaks, at base, a contempt for the body and this contempt will invariably manifest itself in other ways and spheres.

To offer an account of the human being as a subject operating within a body, in a socio-historic context within which she launches claims, against and towards which she defines herself in determinate relations, is to repudiate abstracted androgynes. Yet the vexing question remains: *Why* androgyny? Why did this notion catch fire? There is yet another, unacknowledged imperative at work within the androgyny debate that may help to explain why the notion is so tenacious. This is an urge located on the level of discourse itself. Androgynism is an instance of what Hegel calls thought which "pacifies itself." Having come face-to-face with daunting philosophical questions, vexing debates over meaning and purposes, moral dilemmas and political puzzles, androgynists turned in upon themselves. Given their indebtedness to classical liberal thought, one way out of the difficulties presented by the antinomies of that discourse is to leap-frog over them. This can look like a solution but it is, in fact, a conceptual cop-out and a theoretical dead-end. Androgyny is sometimes over-used in the way "dialectical" is: whenever a thinker bumps up against a stubborn theoretical, analytic, or moral dilemma and seeks a tidy way out that has the additional advantage of being politically "correct," he may sprinkle on a "dialectic" here or an "androgyny" there like so many conceptual croutons.

Androgyny, at base, is a very bizarre idea. As featured in feminist discourse it is a discursive artifact having no essential connection to anything other than itself. It is tied to no real (natural or social) object. Androgynists lodge rhetorical claims involving wholly unreal characterizations of abstract futures rather than struggling to create a set of reflective possibilities for human emancipation within the historic and social world. Androgyny *imposes* a rationalistic external standard upon human subjects and finds them wanting (unenlightened, irrational, living in bad faith, clinging to old superstitions, or wallowing in false consciousness). The androgynous faith is endlessly self-confirming. Not making contact with reality, it need never bump up against

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opposition, binds, tensions, paradoxes, ironies. A strange purity enters and the end-point is silence: the silence of the human subject who cannot, by definition, speak as an *androgynous* subject. In this way androgynism helps to "bury the problems which have gathered behind the contradictory desires and refusals of contemporary heterosexuality."[50] It proffers no ideal toward which people may reasonably aspire. In its dream of the fusion of social being with social consciousness it depoliticizes by eliminating all lines of fault through which critical ruptures might be possible. Androgynists offer up only a politics of displacement which leaves human subjects stuck, once again, in a sexual politics that aims to desexualize the subject. The androgynist impulse is in league, not at odds with, the social world in its primary force. If the androgynist project were activated it would speed up processes of rationalization; it would further homogenize human subjects. As Kristeva put it: "Feminism can be but one of capitalism's more advanced needs to rationalize."[51] Having first reduced the richness and mystery of the human body as a point of reference, a locus for action, a foundation for identity, and a way of knowing, androgynists point to their one-dimensional creation and go on to confuse real human beings with their impoverished vision. Androgynists are the bland leading the bland.

50. Rosenthal, "Feminism Without Contradictions," *op.cit.*, p. 42.

51. Julia Kristeva, "Woman Can Never Be Defined," in Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron, ed., *New French Feminisms. an Anthology* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1980), p. 141.

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CIVIL SOCIETY AGAINST THE STATE: POLAND 1980-81

by Andrew Arato

Civil Society?

The categories of civil society are not extraneous to the Polish events. The participants themselves and their Western collaborators have characterized their struggle in terms of society against the state. "The state has not been able to successfully dissolve civil society," writes Smolar in the preface to a volume of writings by Polish dissidents. "The texts . . . are manifestations of the existence and vitality of civil society in a country ruled by a communist party."[1] As Kuron put it, "Society organizes itself as a democratic movement and becomes active outside the limits of the institutions of the totalitarian state."[2] KOR (an acronym for Workers' Defense Committee) is renamed KSS-KOR (Social Self-Defense Committee-KOR) to indicate its support of all initiatives for both interest representation and the defense of civil rights. In one form or another, the idea of the reconstitution of civil society through the rule of law and the guarantee of civil rights, a free public sphere and a plurality of independent associations is present in all of the opposition documents. According to Michnik, today the state can obtain a minimum of legitimacy only if it implements three points of the August 21 Gdansk agreement as the basis for a genuine "new social contract": protection of civil rights, tolerance of public opinion and the acceptance of a compromise "crossing the totalitarian power structure with a democratic mechanism of corporate representation."[3]

While before 1980 most writers generally spoke of a human rights movement (this is more accurate for the Czech opposition around Charter 77), others have been more all-encompassing. Thus, following Kolakowski, Rupnik characterizes the transformation of Polish dissent from 1968 to 1978 as "the end of revisionism and the rebirth of the civil society."[4] In describing the 1980 events, Fenchel and Weis are forced to coin a German term, *Zivilgesellschaft*, to designate something no longer captured by *bürgerliche Gesellschaft* (today the equivalent of "bourgeois society"), i.e., the organization of a plurality of interests outside the state in an increasingly independent social sphere.[5] Along with Pelikan,[6] they speak of the emergence of a dual power between the existing state and a new self-managing society. To be sure, in today's Poland dual power is rarely mentioned. One of the few to have actually used the concept, first secretary Stanislaw Kania, whom no one has ever accused of any

1. In Z. Erard, G.M. Zygier, eds., *La Pologne: Une Société en Dissidence* (Paris, 1978).
2. Interview in *Les Temps Modernes,* quoted by A. Drawicz in Pelikan and Wilke, eds., *Opposition ohne Hoffnung?* (Hamburg, 1979).
3. Cf. "Zeit der Hoffnung," in *Der Spiegel,* No. 38 (September 15, 1980), p. 153.
4. In Rudolf Tökes, *Opposition in Eastern Europe* (Baltimore, 1979), pp. 60ff. The same terminology is used for the Soviet Union, but without adequate justification, by Moshe Lewin, *Political Undercurrents of Soviet Economic Debates.*
5. "Staat, Partei, Gewerkschaft: Thesen zu Polen," in *Links* (November 1980), p. 17.
6. Cf. J. Pelikan, "Bahro's Ideas on Changes in Eastern Europe," in R. Wolter, ed., *Rudolf Bahro: Critical Responses* (White Plains, N.Y., 1980), pp. 168-185.

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knowledge of history or political theory, declared in January 1981 that history has no example of dual power and, of course, no such thing will be permitted in Poland. The leadership of Solidarity seems also emphatic on this point. They have stated repeatedly that they are only interested in the workers' interest and not in political power. On January 19, even Lech Walesa stressed the union's non-political character.[7]

This seems to be a crucial tactical point to the extent that a direct challenge to the threatened single party would bring Soviet intervention. Yet, what is at issue is the democratic opposition's underlying premises concerning the society it wants, and thinks possible, in the short run.[8] While the long-range goal is parliamentary mediation between state and society, for the present it is unclear whether the renunciation of state power is only tactical or prefigures a new type of movement that seeks to rebuild structures of social solidarity, bypassing state power altogether. In the latter case, which is the position of KOR and the milieu around Solidarity, there is still a gap between minimal and maximal interpretations of the institutional starting point for a long road that may eventually lead to a parliamentary state and a democratic society. This is not shared by the whole democratic opposition and different strategies have emerged. One point, however, unites them all: the viewpoint of civil society against the state — the desire to institutionalize and preserve the new level of social independence.

Civil Society, West and East

All of the proposed alternatives of independent Polish development are compatible with the re-emergence of civil society. What is at stake here is the relevance to the East European context of a category of early modern Western political theory. Differentiating what from the Greeks to the 18th century has been considered one, the political and the social dimensions have been institutionalized[9] as the state and civil society. This institutionalization was always contradictory[10] and its central mediating element, an emancipated public sphere, has proved to be rather fragile.[11] This

7. Periodically, the members of KOR make the same point: "The democratic movement is not challenging the power of the state in its own sphere or even the leading role of the party in the state. It is not building a new party or seeking to capture and exercise or even participate in state power." Cf. Adam Michnik, "Die Letzte Chance," in *Der Spiegel* (December 23, 1980).

8. These premises are not always articulated clearly or consistently — perhaps deliberately so. When Michnik, for example, argues that the new union will be political only in the sense that unions in England, Italy and the United States are political, one immediately recalls their different political roles from one another, not to mention the new role of the Polish unions. Cf. Michnik, "Zeit der Hoffnung," p. 152.

9. For this concept, cf. C. Castoriadis, *L'Institution Imaginaire de la Société* (Paris, 1975).

10. In his classic *Strukturwandel der Oeffentlichkeit* (Neuwied, 1962), Habermas speaks of the contradictory institutionalization of the bourgeois public sphere (the logic of publicity and the logic of private property, i.e., the logic of an all-inclusive discursive process without domination, and that of a new form of exclusion-domination). Since the contradiction has at least three terms (corresponding to the logics of state, society and economy) it may be better to speak of the heterogeneous institutionalization, a term that Castoriadis has coined to indicate his own distance from an earlier position when he spoke only of the institutionalization of capitalism. For the history of the concept of civil society, see Manfred Riedel, "Bürger, Staatsbürgen, Bürgentum" and "Gesellschaft, bürgerliche," in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe,* Vol. I (Stuttgart, 1972) and Vol. II (Stuttgart, 1975).

11. Although Habermas' *Strukturwandel* remains the pathbreaking study of the fate of civil society, his lack of emphasis on the role of social movements in constituting civil society, i.e., the bourgeois public sphere, needs correction. More differentiated but far more limited are a series of historical studies on the tensions between state and society in pre-1848 Germany. Cf. R.

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contradiction has resulted in projects of social emancipation against the capitalist economy and the non-democratic state. The differentiating, rationalizing tendencies of modernity as well as the need for new forms of social integration may favor the autonomy of society from both the state and the economy. At any rate, contemporary self-management movements in the West can be seen as means for the re-emergence of civil society.[12] Only in Eastern Europe, however, do social movements themselves see their struggle in these terms. Is this a development that, if successful, will regenerate the same contradictions of civil society as in the West, or give rise to something genuinely new, pointing toward the future meaning of emancipation?

In Western Europe, the split between state and civil society would have been unthinkable independently of the state's efforts "from above" in bringing it about. On the other hand, the extent of the critical public sphere mediating between society and the state depended on the strength of the social movements and institutions generated "from above" struggling against the old society as well as the new state. Of course, the struggle against the old society's limitations and against the state's economic tutelage was carried on most effectively by the increasingly powerful interests of a free market economy, themselves reinforced by the rationalizing efforts of modern state bureaucracies. Yet, the social autonomy articulated in the political public sphere and parliamentarianism of Europe and America was brought about by social strata among which the new bourgeoisie was only a part. Thus, three sets of actors were involved in the arena between state and society in Western Europe. In terms of institutional results, the economy or the state turned out to be strongest, society the weakest.

This situation in Eastern Europe was considerably different.[13] A comparable constellation of forces existed until 1917, but did not manage to bring about a separation of state and society — even in the purely economic sense. Everywhere the state was overwhelmingly powerful. Although primarily interested in its own modernization, this state power did seek to organize independent social and economic institutions. While Eastern European autocracy cannot be considered feudalism[14] or even *Ständestaat*, because of the weight of state power, the latter was the result of social compromises that left the old society far more intact here than in Western Europe. While there is a good deal of difference in the strengths of state, economy and society in the three empires dividing what constitutes today's Eastern Europe, on the whole, the state was strongest everywhere and society was by far the weakest.[15] With

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Koselleck, *Preussen zwischen Reform und Revolution* (Stuttgart, 1967) as well as his "Staat und Gesellschaft in Preussen 1815-1848" and Werner Conze, "Das Spannungsfeld von Staat und Gesellschaft in Vormärz," both in Conze, ed., *Staat und Gesellschaft in deutschen Vormärz* (Stuttgart, 1962); O. Brunner, *Neue Wege der Verfassungs und Sozialgeschichte* (Göttingen, 1968); L. Gall, "Liberalismus und bürgerliche Gesellschaft. Zu Charakter und Entwicklung der liberalen Bewegung in Deutschland," in Gall, ed., *Liberalismus* (Köln, 1980).

12. This is Alain Touraine's position. See his *L'Après Socialisme* (Paris, 1980), and *Le Voix et la Régard* (Paris, 1978).

13. For the Russian context, where determination from above was most extreme, see Dietrich Geyer, "Gesellschaft als staatliche Verantstaltung. Sozialgeschichtliche Aspekte des russischen Behüordenstaats in 18. Jahrhundert," in *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft im vorrevolutionären Russland*, ed. D. Geyer (Köln, 1975).

14. Cf. Perry Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*.

15. The Tocquevillian thesis concerning the continuity of absolutism, revolution and post-revolutionary *étatism* should not be applied too mechanically in this context. The destructive leveling of the old society occurred in a less continuous fashion: the task was achieved to a greater extent than in Western Europe by the post-revolutionary (1917) or post-World War II (1945) states. Here lies a crucial difference among the various countries of Eastern Europe today. In Russia the destruction of the old society after 1917 coincided with the endless

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the exception of Czechoslovakia, the new state power that completed the destruction of the old society was powerful enough either to destroy or to inhibit the emergence of new institutions of social autonomy. It only realized the negative side of modern civil society. There, the social, economic and cultural primacy of the prerogative state[16] meant that the parameters of civil society were non-existent: the system of needs (excluded by the imperative control plan), the institution of laws (excluded by the idea of substantive justice), the system of plurality (excluded by the one-party monopoly), and the system of publics (excluded by the idea of absolute knowledge).

The absorption of society and the economy by state structures is not fully modern. The incomplete differentiation of state and economy prevents Soviet-type societies from competing economically with advanced capitalist countries and from satisfying the economic needs of East Europeans whose need structure is affected by Western standards. This is overwhelmingly demonstrated by the economic picture and reform attempts in East Europe during the last 10 to 15 years. These attempts deal with the constitution from above of an economy at least partly differentiated from the state without allowing the emergence of social autonomy. These attempts need not have been everywhere equally unsuccessful, as some historical materialistically inclined reform economist must have secretly hoped: under some conditions even *laissez-faire* economics is compatible with autocratic political institutions. Thus, for reasons having to do with unique political traditions inherited from the interwar period, during the Prague Spring in 1968, limited economic and social reforms "from above" dramatically released energies "from below" that captured the ruling party "from within," threatening to reconstitute civil society, i.e., to abolish the existing system altogether.

Ruling parties learned the 1968 lesson well. With the exception of Hungary, where the 1956 events created favorable circumstances for the regime, subsequent reform attempts from above granting any even purely economic autonomy were drastically limited. Two main roads to the reconstitution of civil society were closed. After Hungary in 1956, the first one, the revolutionary overthrow of the authoritarian state from below has been open only in the imperial center, where conditions of social integration are unique because of its being the imperial center and its relative isolation from the rest of the world. After Czechoslovakia in 1968, the second one, the reformist attempt from above, i.e., through the ruling parties themselves, has been considered the functional equivalent of the first by all ruling parties — especially the Soviet party of the imperial center that will not tolerate the overthrow from below or the conquest from within of any of the other ruling communist parties. Today there is the possibility of a third road. The Polish opposition from 1976 to 1980 has shown that there is *at least* the possibility of structural reforms of authoritarian socialism from below.

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strengthening of a state power that was to destroy also the new society in the making in the 1930s. In Bulgaria and Romania the destruction of the old society in 1945 was not even followed by the emergence of a new, modern one. Poland and Hungary represent societies where the interwar period involved uneasy mixtures of survivals from the old regime and elements of the new society. Such a mixture already characterized pre-World War I Germany with modern elements coming to the fore in Weimar to be destroyed by the fascist revolution against modernity. Only Czechoslovakia evolved a fully modern society in the interwar period. In all of these four countries along the western edge of Eastern Europe, the social mix was fully statized after 1948, with some countries enjoying a brief period of social ferment expressed in parliamentarianism and social reform up to 1948.

16. The concept of the prerogative state (*Massnahmenstaat*) comes from Ernst Fraenkel, *Dual State* (New York, 1941).

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Can such a model from below lead to a contemporary reinstitutionalization of civil society? Can it lead to a form of civil society unshackled by its historic contradictions? Before turning to the first question, there are three reasons for answering yes to the second. First, unlike the West, or interwar Eastern Europe for that matter, in Poland the struggle for civil society is occurring *after* and not before industrialization. Hence, imperatives for economic growth do not have to play the same role as in the West. The results of a civil society not adequately separated from a centrally planned economy are known to Poles from the Western experience. Secondly, in Poland, the constitution of civil society is not occurring from above. Neither is the state interested in playing such a role that contradicts its principle of organization in a way that did not for Western European absolutism, nor is it prevented from doing so by anyone below. The results of various forms of étatist modernization are also known to the Poles. Thirdly, in the relative absence of the two potential agencies for the constitution of civil society (capitalist logic of industrialization and étatist logic of modernization from above) the social movement in Poland can make an emancipated public sphere far more central in the nascent civil society than anywhere before. Of the three possible institutional centers of civil society — state, economy and the public sphere — until now there has been only the primacy of the first or the second.

On the other hand, the need for some compromise with existing state power, and the potentially powerful influence of the existing Western model of civil society are grounds for pessimism. Can a social movement achieve a workable model of civil society alone, through structural reforms from below? And if so, what kind of civil society will result, given a formally intact, authoritarian state?

Structural Reform From Below

In the 1970s, critical East European intellectuals have realized a reform of the system based on the transformation of the ruling parties "from within" has become impossible as a result of 1968.[17] The political alternative seemed to be revolution or resignation.[18] In 1971, Kolakowski observed that in terms of the classical Marxian tradition, this alternative reduces to one: resignation.[19] Revolution on the periphery of the empire (the 1956 model) would be crushed by the center. In the center itself, on the other hand, it is implausible because of the legitimating advantage provided by an empire organized around a national core. Thus, Kolakowski proposed partial yet structural reforms from below aiming at the reconstruction of the social realm.

This was closer to the forms of East European opposition in the 1970s than the choice between revolution or resignation. In several countries defensive human rights campaigns such as Charter 77 and the Russian Helsinki Watch Committee, reinforced by international publicity, became a factor in dissent politics. In a few countries the seeds of an alternative public sphere have been planted by *Samizdat* literature. In the wake of two major and partly successful working class eruptions, a new offensive

17. Cf. M. Rakovski, *Toward an East European Marxism* (London, 1978). There are some important exceptions. See I. Szelenyi and G. Konrad, *The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power* (New York, 1979). Lately, however, they have been de-emphasizing this aspect. It is completely absent from Konrad's latest work, *Az Autonomia Kisertese* (Paris, 1980).

18. Bahro's *The Alternative in Eastern Europe* (London, 1979), i.e., the building of a new communist party outside the existing one to replace and reabsorb its predecessor as a result of its social hegemony, is impossible. Under conditions of Eastern European state security, such a party cannot be built. More importantly, nowhere is the population interested in yet another Leninist vanguard.

19. . "Thèses sur l'Espoir et le Désespoir," in *La Pologne, op.cit.*, pp. 83, 95.

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strategy was formulated in Poland: reforms from below, different from both reform attempts from within the parties and revolutionary challenges from outside. The main articles explicating this strategy, by Kolakowski, Michnik and Kuron, were written in the wake of each of two great working class challenges: 1971 and late 1976. Of course, the new strategy became applicable to 1980 because of the continuity of the workers' experience and, from 1976, other strata. Yet, the conceptualization provided a framework to the challenge from below between 1976 and 1980 — at least in the form of KOR's activity.

The three essays by Kolakowski, Michnik and Kuron move from system to action, anticipating coming events. Kolakowski develops a model of totalitarianism as a society deprived of all social self-defense. If this kind of totalitarianism were successful, it could be overthrown only as a whole. If it is only a tendency laden with internal contradictions, then it can be partially reversed by a counter-tendency: the self-defense of society. According to Kolakowski, the plasticity and limits of a system which, among other things, depends on the social actors' consciousness of this plasticity and limits, can never be theoretically established. What is clear is that the totalitarian project in East Europe is self-contradictory. Thus, the desire for unity clashes with the desire for security, the practical irrelevance of ideology with the need for ideological continuity, the necessity of technical development with its political limits, the need for national legitimacy with the partial surrender of national sovereignty, etc. Whether these contradictions become the system's limitation depends on actions of those below. Without resistance, the system can be successfully totalized. Through constant pressure "by society," which here becomes *partially its own subject,* a society more in harmony with purely social needs can be wrested from the state. Neither national nor popular sovereignty is in this framework an all-or-nothing proposition. Contrary to revolutionaries' theses, partial structural reforms that weaken the existing system are possible. But those who want all will get nothing.

Kolakowski's analysis was further developed by Michnik in 1976.[20] Five years and one uprising later, the position became much more political. The transformation of culture and the reactivation of intellectuals — shaken in 1968 by anti-semitic attacks — made it possible to turn from the party as the agent of reform to independent public opinion. In the wake of the 1971 "social contract" between two parties, only one of which was organized, it was necessary to formally organize this independent pressure from below. Closer to action, its limits could be more clearly defined. Society can organize itself to force great concessions from the power structure, but neither existing links of Poland to the Soviet Union nor one-party rule can be challenged without precipitating Soviet intervention. In this context, party self-democratization à la Prague 1968 is dangerous. The "international context" eliminates both reforms from above and revolution. As long as the Soviet system remains intact, structural reform from below is the last hope for democratization.

According to Michnik, the formation of stable labor organizations after 1976 and the powerful Catholic church's defense of civil rights prevent this strategy from doom. The new strategy of constant struggle for reforms to expand civil liberties and guarantee human rights contributed to the founding of KOR. Once the organization was off the ground, its strategy expanded. In a 1976 pamphlet on oppositional strategy,[21] Jacek Kuron, the most radical organizer, first outlined a systematic

20. Cf. "Une Strategie pour l'Opposition Polonaise," in *ibid. Survey* has published an English version: "The New Evolutionism" in the Summer-Autumn 1976 issue.

21. "Pour une Platforme unique de l'Opposition" in *La Pologne.*

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program for the reconstitution of civil society through the re-establishment of the rule of law, an independent public sphere and freedom of association. Ordinarily, these reforms would result in a struggle for parliamentary democracy, but not in the present Polish context. Here Kuron found himself in a paradox. While he remains an advocate of a direct, self-managing form of democracy,[22] he now claims that this is meaningless within totalitarianism and should not exhaust democratic politics. While he realizes that a democratic parliamentary system is beyond the limits defined by one-party rule, he proposes social self-management as the goal of reforms from below. Social movements as the loci of a new social autonomy provide a solution to this paradox. A multiplicity of social movements (peasants, workers, Catholics and intellectuals) can progressively limit the party-state on the basis of de-collectivized agriculture, *de facto* compromises concerning price structure and the emergence of workers' self-organization, religious and cultural freedom for church activity, *de facto* toleration of a second public sphere, etc.

Three major questions arise here. First, should social movements be emphasized in a presumably totalitarian context where no form of social independence is permitted? Second, if the movements from below are possible, will they not need some support from the ruling party to be successful? Third, if action from below and above can be coordinated, will not the role of reform down below amount either to very little or to a struggle for parliamentarianism? These questions were debated between 1976 and 1980. A positive answer to the first meant the reintroduction of the totalitarian thesis primarily for polemical rather than theoretical reasons. As long as one seriously expected the system's liberalization, the totalitarian thesis remained unacceptable. For critical East European intellectuals its acceptance would have meant the end of one strategy before the birth of a new one.

With the political stress on social reform movements from below, the other totalitarian thesis concerning total autonomization of society also needed re-examination. Kolakowski saw this as a statist tendency that will be only as successful as political resistance will allow it to be. After 1976 this point was elaborated in terms of informal, familial, and small-scale private networks of social relations that can provide self-defense even in the absence of formal movements. This largely spontaneous, defensive response makes possible a higher, more organized level of social plurality. Circles of family and friends protect the private sphere from an administered public one. They permit the defense of a given society, its customs, mentalities, its national and local identities. The reconstruction of society is possible because the foundations are there. Only more complex social ties have to be reconstituted.[23]

22. J. Kuron, K. Modzelewski, *Monopolsozialismus* (Hamburg, 1969).

23. Kasimierz Wojcicki, "The Reconstruction of Society" in this issue of *Telos*. Some of the same arguments are made in Konrad's new book. In its original version, the totalitarian thesis applies to countries where the system was not imposed from outside. Cf. Wojcicki, *op.cit.* To mention only two sets of contrary sources here, see recent literature (Skilling, Griffiths, Hough *et al.* in political science, Rittersporn in history) on interest conflict in the Soviet Union, as well as the various political culture schools stressing the compromises of the party-state with traditional Russian forms. The thesis of the survival of society and of its potential political significance applies to several other East European countries. In Hungary, for example, where no one at present envisions the possibility of social movements as in Poland, Hegedüs has stressed the potential plurality of social forces seeking some autonomy and independent public expression. From the viewpoint of macro-policy, Hegedüs admits that the ruling party can integrate but not abolish them. Speaking from direct experience, Kis and Bence have indicated under what conditions private life becomes the foundation for a new public life. Pointing to the complicated

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Thus, the rediscovery of society under state socialism can lead to an opposition program, but one more limited than that of reform social movements. Even in the Polish situation, however, it is questionable whether such movements from below are adequate bases for a reform program. Thus, the necessity of a preliminary split, or a differentiation of the ruling parties, as a precondition is presumed by Bahro and Hegedüs, even after 1968. This is even more true for Pelikan, who sees the model of 1968 as fundamental.[24] All successful democratizations of Eastern European regimes presuppose action both from above and below. According to him, only the Prague Spring provided an adequate model of coordination — the beginning rather than the end of a strategy for democratization. Even if significant changes since 1968 have strengthened the conservative forces within the ruling parties — especially neo-Stalinists and the military-industrial complex — and have eliminated all serious intra-party discussion, the situation remains unchanged. No movement from below can alone carry out significant reform programs and the parties are not in principle closed to reform ideas. If after '68 reform initiatives have shifted toward outside the ruling parties, and the building of parallel institutions has become necessary and possible, the opposition must not overlook the possibility to "work inside" ruling parties, splitting rationally thinking functionaries from the conservatives.[25]

Two irreconcilable political differences emerge here. The first concerns the source of long-run initiatives. Is it from above (older communist reformism) or an alternative to it (Bahro), or is it from below, in a pluralistic society (KOR)? The second concerns the basis of cooperation. Is this an identity or similarity of goals, or merely compatibility of fundamentally different goals? As Kuron once put it, KOR believes only in the pragmatism of those in power and not in the existence of a liberal wing in the party.[26] Presented with an organized movement from below, the party's pragmatic wing may realize that the necessary crisis management of the existing system can only work on the basis of these new facts. This may lead to a reconsideration of the movement's moribund experiments of economic reforms. This can be the basis of a

networks of personal ties among intellectuals and workers that stood in the way of the emergence of atomized "lonely crowds," they argue that, under crisis conditions, normal adjustments can become the basis of collective expression. According to them, in Poland this is the foundation of lasting social movements. But even in Hungary — where the opposition is almost exclusively intellectual — the existing network of personal ties provides the basis for an alternative, critical public sphere, now in formation. Cf. Andras Hegedüs, "Democracia és Szocializmus Keleten és Nyugaton" (Democracy and Socialism in East and West), in *Magyar Fuzetek* (Paris, 1978), No. 1. An English version is in Coates and Singleton, eds., *The Just Society* (Nottingham, 1977). For Kis and Bence's critical response to Hegedüs, see in the same journal: "Magjegyzések Hegedüs Andras nyilt leveléhez" (Notes on the Open Letter of A. Hegedüs). In more or less the same debate, Vajda has also stressed the possibility in Hungary of an alternative public sphere, but also warned that under conditions entirely different than in Poland the mechanical imitation of the specific model of the Polish opposition would lead to a new vanguardism. Cf. *Magyar Fuzetek* (Paris, 1978), No. 2.

24. Cf. his two articles, "Der Kampf um Menschenrechte" in *Menschenrechte. Ein Jahrbuch zu Osteuropa* (Hamburg, 1977) and "Reform und Revolution: die falsche Alternative" in *Opposition Ohne Hoffnung? Jahrbuch zu Osteuropa 2* (Hamburg, 1979) as well as his "Bahro's Ideas," *op.cit.*,

25. Under this formula Pelikan hopes to reunite the opposition while Bahro admits the impossibility of changing the ruling party from within, and Michnik recognizes the necessity of having "partners" if not "allies" within the ruling parties.

26. After 1968, there are two reasons to doubt the existence of such a wing: (1) the often noted de-ideologization of parties closing off the possibility of a purely imminent critique; and (2) the actual experience in 1968 of the incompatibility of genuine liberalization and the system's organizational principles.

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"partnership" between the opposition and a section of the party, leading to a new social compromise between state and society. This has been KOR's position from 1976 to today.

The idea of a "historic compromise" has also repeatedly come up in Hegedüs' writings between 1977 and 1980, but with a different stress. This raises the third question: is there a third possibility in Eastern Europe between two forms of compromise between society and the state, each of which is useless from the viewpoint of one of the two sides? This issue was debated within the Hungarian opposition, between Hegedüs, seeking to move from reformism from above to reformism from below, and Kis and Bence, representing KOR's position. The disagreement expressed two different interpretations of the kind of possible and desirable state-society duality in East Europe — a disagreement that also surfaced in Poland during the 1980 events. While often criticized for his party-directed reform strategy in the 1960s, Hegedüs was one of the first outside of Poland to raise the perspective of the restoration of civil society as a state-society duality transcending traditional liberal division of the public and the private without accepting the dissolution of either. Using Habermas' double conception of critical *Oeffentlichkeit* as the "political" dimension of the "private" sphere and the social communicative dimension of the state sphere, he argues that both the social and the political dimensions need to be public[27] in order to be the foundation of a protected privacy.

When he worked out his program and the strategy of its realization — without any knowledge of Polish developments — what emerged was a minimal program for the reconstitution of civil society. He does assign initiative to social movements from below, but he expects an unusually high degree of tolerance and even support from above. Although he defines the task of the social sphere as "authority" over the political bureaucratic sphere that continues to exercise "power," how this authority is to control anything is left extremely vague. Since he rejects both interest representation (e.g., independent trade unions)[28] and especially party pluralism in the political sphere, it is not clear whether his plurality could be organized at all, although this is the only thing that would distinguish it from the latent interest groups of Soviet and East European society. The charge of conservatism is not fair here, since Hegedüs also indicates from the system's viewpoint how societies must change to recover their socio-economic dynamism and solve their endemic rationality and information crisis. Yet, he is open to Kis' and Bence's charge that the plausibility of his program rests on an ultimate compatibility of his proposal with the existing system's organizational principle. What Hegedüs' analysis lacks is an emphasis on organized pressure forcing the power structure to allow something not compatible with its interests. Finally, he does not evaluate existing East European movements realistically: "The movements are both stronger and weaker than Hegedüs wants. Stronger, whether they can realize their goals does not depend on the power structure's good intentions. Weaker, because they cannot replace independent institutions of representation."[29]

To the extent that social movements are not strong enough to replace existing one-party rule by a multi-party one, Hegedüs has a point. Here he avoids an apology

27. Hegedüs, "Democracy," *op.cit.*, p. 85. It is another matter that he does not propose any scheme for making public the official state sphere in any sense other than the pre-modern representative public sphere in Habermas' typology. He consciously rejects the Western model of a political public in Parliament.

28. Cf. interview in *Menschenrechte, op.cit.*, p. 394.

29. Kis and Bence, *op.cit.*, p. 111.

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for contemporary Western societies where, without the direct democracy of significant social movements, a multi-party system can also be seen as monolithic. Kis and Bence are correct, however, in pointing out that without representative institutions there are no mechanisms of compromise among social movements — except when imposed from above. Hegedüs' insistence, paralleled by Bahro, that the internal structure of state socialist societies is more integrated than in capitalist countries takes this *de facto* integration from above for granted. This is the real weakness of his position. Its strength is its acceptance of the state-society duality. This is bypassed by Kis and Bence through the struggle for the transformation of the state sphere. They do stress that without the institutionalization of some kind of pluralism, even in situations of political crisis the unity of the power structure will be re-established and room to maneuver will be severely limited. But does it follow that the plurality of social movements can be institutionalized and coordinated only through the establishment of a multi-party, parliamentary form of political pluralism?

The absence of immediate political relevance allowed Hegedüs and Kis and Bence to draw out the ultimate implications of two diverging interpretations — implications that, in the Polish context, were suppressed for political reasons. The actual evolution of the strategy and its many successes from 1976 to 1980 were to narrow the distance between interpretations. During this period there was increasingly little difference between theorists as different as Kolakowski and Brus, Pelikan and the spokesmen of Charter 77, Hegedüs and his two younger compatriots.

While many of the unnecessary paradoxes of both maximalism and minimalism were solved in practice, many real questions were temporarily put aside. Thus, there was an increasing consensus around the following four points, at least among Polish and Hungarian intellectuals: (1) The limit of reform from below is constituted by the given state institutions, i.e., the single-party system that cannot be overthrown (1956) or democratized from within (1968); (2) The means of pressure from below are organized as open and public, un-conspiratorial and non-avant garde social movements — each representing one constellation of interests. (3) Pressure from below can force the existing system to adhere to its own legality as well as to *de facto* toleration of the plurality constituted by social movements. (4) The organization of plurality, in particular of an alternative, critical public sphere, can bypass the state altogether by setting up parallel institutions. Of course, here too national and international pressures are necessary for the survival of these parallel institutions. (5) Legality, plurality, publicity, though important means of organizing pressure on the state, are to be seen above all as ends in themselves.

Point five characterizes the string of successes of the social movement in Poland between 1976 and 1980, as well as its limits. Of course, the three categories typify the 19th century ascent of civil society — only the system of needs is missing. In other words, the opposition succeeded in achieving tolerance for its activity, but not in forcing the state to change policy — especially in the economy. Facing an unfolding civil society it was forced to tolerate, the party-state chose self-isolation and immobilism. The results were partial victory of the 1976 movement defending the old constitution against changes that were to formalize the leading role of the party and the existing relation to the Soviet Union; partial victory for workers prosecuted for their role in 1976; relative success in creating committees for organizations of workers, peasants and students; and surprisingly high degrees of success in establishing institutions of an alternative public such as extensive *Samizdat* publications of books and journals, and the flying university. Most important, the various movements and

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institutions were closely coordinated by the communication networks of human rights groups and Catholic intellectuals.[30]

Another result was the economic near-collapse of the system steered by a party-state unwilling to undertake any reforms that could split its ranks while threatened from below. The massive reliance on foreign credits and imported capital goods required serious reforms. Without them, they could only win time and eventually contribute to the proportions of the disaster.[31] Once the crisis came, industrial workers were able to achieve something new in the history of Soviet-type systems: the *legalization* of an independent, self-managing institution of interest representation — the independent labor union Solidarity. Beyond this, with the acceptance of the 21 points in the Gdansk accords, they have received a set of political promises amounting to the legalization of an independent cultural sphere as well as a set of economic promises unrealizable without large-scale economic reforms. All this has occurred in the context of (1) an unreformed party-state, supported by increasing threats from the Soviet Union as well as East Germany and Czechoslovakia; (2) a raging economic crisis; and (3) the spectacular unfolding of literally dozens of movements, projects for self-management and self-administration under the umbrella of an independent union with ten million members.

The Question of Dual Power

Without Soviet intervention Poland will never be the same. But what kind of society can emerge on the basis of structural reforms from below that leave the old system's institutional core intact? It was in 1976 and independently of the emerging pattern in Poland that the term "dual power" was first applied to Eastern Europe, by Bahro. What he probably had in mind was a repetition of the classic pattern of February to October 1917, itself interpreted as the Bolsheviks' growing hegemony coexisting with a classical form of bourgeois state power, leading to the establishment of a new, one-party state-society. For Bahro, a new League of Communists is to play the Bolsheviks' role, split from the Communist Party, but the core of a future unified power structure. The irrelevance of this strategy needs no further emphasis here. What is more interesting is that, in 1978, Pelikan interpreted, or deliberately misinterpreted, Bahro's dual power to mean the emergence of "parallel structures alongside official institutions — for example, book publishing houses and periodicals, universities, autonomous trade unions, workers' committees, petitions to official agencies, committees to defend the persecuted, etc."[32]

Though very sympathetic, the description involves institutions with rather different relations to political power. At any rate, it no longer describes a situation in which one institution, the independent trade union, because of its new legal status, size, militance, organization and communication, embodies an unprecedented challenge to the party-state. Outside of Poland, some refer to the new situation as one of double power which can be stabilized and expanded.[33] Others, however, see it as a

30. For three good summaries and analyses, see Rupnik, *op.cit*; Joseph Kay, "The Polish Opposition," and Andrzej Drawicz, "Experience of the Democratic Opposition," both in *Survey* (Fall 1979).

31. Cf. Renate Damus, "The Economic and Political Causes of the Strike Movements in 1980," in this issue of *Telos*.

32. "Bahro's Ideas," *op.cit.*, p. 181.

33. Cf. G. Bence, "Une Nouvelle Formule," in *L'Alternative* (January-February 1981), p. 34; who uses the term "counter power" to indicate a form of political power that does not seek to substitute itself for the party or the state.

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contradiction which could justify the use of force from above *or* outside.[34] While in Poland the party takes something near this second position, a significant part of the Western mass media also considers Solidarity as Poland's *de facto* second political party. In this context, what is the meaning of the union leadership's repeated insistence that the group is non-political?[35]

First, emphasis should be placed on interest representation. This is what is new in the Polish situation as against experiments in council democracy where it is a question of rebuilding a monolithic order from the ground up. Solidarity considers it necessary to represent empirical workers' interests against whoever holds political and especially economic power — even against the organizationally separate agencies of industrial self-management. Here is the significance of an independent union as the organizational form of the current struggle. Secondly, the Solidarity leadership accepts the existing structure of the state and the leading role of the party as given. But, third, the topic of dual power and, with it, of the union's political nature, is far from exhausted. In Poland today, everything is political. Michnik's response to this remark, and his cautious reference to Solidarity, is revealing. The independent union, he says, is not political in the sense that "it does not seek political power in the state."[36]

But a force capable of pushing back state power, of occupying some of the vacated space, of controlling and constraining what cannot be eliminated, replaced or diminished — such a force must be an enormous political force in a previously totally political society. As Kuron put it, the movement of industrial workers now institutionalized as Solidarity has brought about a new level of independence of civil society.[37] But what role should it play? Is it to be (1) *the* alternative power bringing about the further legal and institutional realization of civil society; or (2) one of the *many* alternative powers to do so; or (3) one form of interest representation under the new situation? Kuron himself says that he has moved from (3) to (2) because only a rapid democratization of Polish society can save the existing state structure from an uncontrollable revolutionary challenge (hence, disintegration followed by Soviet intervention).[38] Such a democratization is impossible without Solidarity continuing to play a key political role. Kuron is serious, however, about this role being, at most, that of *primus inter pares*. No one in Poland seeks to remythologize the workers as the universal subject. Even in this radical interpretation, Solidarity's aim is not to establish unity but autonomous heterogeneity, i.e., its political function should be to defend the establishment of a whole host of associations that in the future would make the union one institution among equals. On the other hand, there should be no question for Kuron of depoliticizing the independent union and other autonomous associations already in existence. This is under attack from two sides: is it not seeking to repoliticize a society deeply tired of its politicization, or alternately, does it not propose a politicization from below that will produce heterogeneity without any coordination?

The first objection is by Wojcicki,[39] a Catholic intellectual advising Solidarity.

34. This is a conclusion that is somehow to be avoided on the level of action. Cf. C. Lefort, "Reculer les Frontiers du Possible," in *Esprit* (January 1981).

35. Cf. "Les Dirigents de 'Solidarité' Face au Pouvoir" in *L'Alternative* (Jan.-Feb., 1981).

36. "What We Want to Do and What We Can Do," in this issue of *Telos*.

37. See the interview with him in *Der Spiegel*, Dec. 15, 1980, p. 107.

38. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 105-107, and especially, "Un Chemin sans Retour," *Esprit* (January 1981), pp.68-72. Indeed, between these two statements (the one in *Esprit* is the earlier one), a slight shift can be seen in his position. An edited version of this last article has appeared in *Dissent* (Winter 1981), pp. 34-39, under the title "What Next for Poland?"

39. "The Reconstruction of Society," *op.cit.*

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Against a social movement increasingly better organized with the independent union as its vanguard, he proposes the creation of independent social institutions constituting a field of social activity wrested away from the omnipotent party apparatus. This achievement he sees as the consequence of a cultural rather than a political process in Poland, and it expresses "the radical need to depoliticize society." Unions should remain unions rather than becoming part of a pluralist system in the making. They should restrict themselves to the defense of employees. He sees KOR as proposing unions as the potential centers of industrial democracy and self-management.

Wojcicki is clearly influenced by the Western European model of civil society and by the Polish church. Thus, he accuses KOR of being still Marxist, of advocating the repoliticization of society, a vanguard role for the working class, and a council democracy compromising the unions' independence. On this level, KOR is *post*- rather than *neo*-Marxist. Even Kuron sees social movements as the reconstitution of civil society in the sense Wojcicki has in mind. If Kuron proposes anything resembling a vanguard role for the unions, this is only to help build other associations of independent interest representation that would challenge this role. He insists on the full organizational separation between unions and future organs of industrial self-management, both because he wants to preserve independent workers' interest representation against any management (including their own), and because he does not want the unions to grow into a bureaucratic-political role, taking responsibility for the decisions of a state system that remains alien to them.

Objections such as Wojcicki's drive Kuron to restate the fundamental disagreement beyond dual power, in terms of the power of society.[40] Both seek the best strategy of avoiding Soviet intervention. To Kuron, this danger lies not in the radical democratization of society but in its insufficient institutionalization that would lead to chaos since the party-state's authority is in shambles. No one can stop the process of democratization without military intervention. In this sense, Wojcicki's suggestion concerning radical depoliticization is irrelevant. But this only makes the integration of the new heterogeneity all the more urgent. Kuron discounts that this can occur *either* through reintegration from above *or* through the democratization of the *whole* system from within because of the apparatus' resistance. Yet, a social system organized according to opposed principles remains extremely unstable and therefore under the threat of intervention.

To solve this problem, Kuron proposes something not only beyond dual power, but also beyond the limits of the new evolutionism. Given that the Russians cannot be fooled about what is occurring in Poland, i.e., a general democratization from below, he proposes to fool them all the same. Assuming that anarchy leads to intervention, but that democratization of Polish society may be acceptable to the Soviets "within limits," i.e., the continued existence of the party's monopoly, he proposes a form of institutionalization to overcome social disorganization and preserve this monopoly — though it is unclear how much the latter is worth in the scheme. Society, i.e., the existing movements, needs to develop unified institutions — a system capable of presenting the party-state power structure with unified demands. Accordingly, economic plans can be reached through coordinated discussions among unions, intellectuals, peasants and the organs of industrial self-management. It is not clear what the party-state is left to do in a Poland so organized — to develop its own

40. "Un Chemin," *op.cit.*, pp. 68-71.

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alternatives and propose them to "society" for confirmation, rejection or negotiation, or to perform administrative and police functions supervised and controlled from below?

The second alternative unites conceptions of direct democracy in the cells of society, with some kind of pluralistic integration that utilizes only the professional bureaucratic apparatus of the existing party-state structure in an administrative capacity. In such a system, to use Szelenyi's ironic formulation, the only thing left for the Communist Party is to assume ceremonial functions resembling the English House of Lords.

Whether the new evolutionism remains a plausible framework for further Polish developments depends on the successful institutionalization of some version of dual power, absent from both Wojcicki (who proposes the depoliticization of society) and Kuron (who proposes the depoliticization of the party-state). Michnik, on the other hand, interprets the Gdansk accords of August 31 as potentially a new social contract between two organized agents: state and society. The compromise is new because it is the first time that both parties are organized. This duality of powers (he does not use the term) may contradict "the sociology of power relations." Yet, he argues that knowledge of limits in Poland by both sides makes possible such an institutional solution.

The party knows it can destroy the new social plurality by appealing for the foreign intervention it abhors. The social movement is constantly reminded that the expropriation of the party's power is beyond limits. Thus, the conditions for a partnership between state and society are provided by external threats. Its stability, however, depends on the party-state becoming a credible partnership. Only a new respect for legality and for the actual plurality of public opinion can relegitimate the state. Finally, in order to avoid the spontaneous destruction of state power from below, negotiation and bargaining between state and society must be institutionalized: forms of legitimate pressure other than strike threats must be found. This general framework is called vaguely but significantly "the crossing of the totalitarian structure of power with the democratic mechanism of corporate representation." According to Michnik, the overall arrangement can be the basis of a stable but plastic equilibrium. The party-state's goal will remain the reintegration of the social associations, while society's goal will be the preservation and extension of its independence.

If Kuron is deliberately vague about the terms of the compromise between the new society and the old state, Michnik remains abstract concerning the contract "that society must conclude with itself, a second social contract." Both recognize that the present unity of Polish society is a negative one. Agreement concerning what is opposed masks important disagreements and conflicts of interest. While Kuron bypasses the vertical structure of compromise with his proposal for a pluralistic "system of society" integrating dozens of autonomous democratically organized groups, Michnik's more plausible proposal of compromise modelled in the August 31 accords leaves open the questions: With whom is the state to negotiate? Which social units are to be part of the negotiation processes? How are they related to each other?

The Question of Plurality

For most of the democratic opposition in Eastern Europe, totalitarianism and pluralism represent exclusive alternatives on interest integration. Western social science approaches to systems of the Soviet type have been in transition from a totalitarian, monolithic paradigm to one that considers these systems quasi-pluralistic

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and characterized by interest group conflicts. Both sets of positions are open to the same objection: monolithic forms of organization and interest group pluralism do not exhaust the possible forms of interest aggregation in complex societies.[41] Nothing proves this better than the highly fluid political situations such as 1980-81 Poland. Here some of the concepts developed in recent critical literature on interest intermediation seem useful.[42] While these concepts have not yet been meaningfully applied, some relevant definitions can be derived that amount to a restatement of the system theoretical interpretation of "liberalization" as crisis management:

(1) The classical organization of intermediate social levels under authoritarian state socialism is "monistic." It involves a large set of groups, or rather organizations, fixed in number, singular, in part ideologically selective, in part compulsory in membership, non-competitive, internally hierarchical, created or totally reformed by the party-state that controls their leadership selection, formulates their "interests" and resolves their conflicts vertically.[43]

(2) Reform from above, i.e., this system's crisis management, involves a transition to a state corporatist version of interest intermediation allowing the recognition of new groups emerged as a result of social change as well as limited independence to already existing organizations.[44] This might involve the replacement of direct state controls with indirect ones, state appointment of leadership by veto power, vertical formulation of demands and resolution of conflicts by some combination of vertical and horizontal procedures, both free of open conflict.

(3) A transition to a "societal corporatist" variant similar to the latter, except that the origins of groups are more independent, conflict-free procedures are guaranteed by horizontal bargaining without state repression. This involves a reconstitution of a version of civil society and is not compatible with the system's organizational principle. In many countries allowing the constitution of independent groups would mean the emergence of voluntary, non-hierarchical and conflict-oriented pluralist and syndicalist organizations. For existing regimes, 1968 is again the negative model of just such a development.[45]

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41. If the Western conflict paradigm of Skilling *et al.* too easily transposes to Soviet-type societies the pluralistic model, this is because of their not particularly democratic interpretation of it for Western societies. Even this version of the model is not easily applicable to the East. The Eastern European opposition realizes that the pluralist model does not describe their societies but this is in part because of their uncritical identification of a highly democratic version of pluralism with existing Western societies.

42. See especially the essay that started the discussion: Philippe Schmitter, "Still the Century of Corporatism?" Pike and Strich, eds., *The New Corporatism* (Notre Dame, 1974), as well as the special issue (April 1977) of *Comparative Political Studies*. See also the interesting but problematic article by Daniel Chirot, "The Corporatist Model and Socialism," in *Theory and Society* (March 1980) and the much older but still useful article by Andrew Janos, "Group Politics in Communist Society: A Second Look at the Pluralist Model," in Huntington and Moore, eds., *Authoritarian Politics in Modern Society* (New York, 1970).

43. Cf. Schmitter, *op.cit.*, for this concept as well as for the distinction between state and societal corporatism used below and for a redefinition of pluralism and syndicalism.

44. Cf. Chirot, *op.cit.* Unfortunately, Chirot overestimates the completeness of this transition and underestimates the oscillation between monism and corporatism that he also mentions. Postulating that Eastern European societies are already corporatist, he mistakenly believes that "liberalization" (i.e., reform from above) involves a shift to a more democratic form of corporatism.

45. As Chirot argues, Yugoslavia has some significant societal corporatist elements that have been initiated from above. But this occurred under conditions of political, national and revolutionary legitimacy. Cf. Bogdan Denitch, *Legitimation of a Revolution*. And even here one

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(4) Under conditions of authoritarian state socialism, pluralist and syndicalist interest representation and conflict resolution can be institutionalized only from below. Once this occurs (as in Poland after 1956), the task of crisis management from the regime's viewpoint is the reintegration of the new forms under state corporatist arrangements. Under such conditions, societal corporatism, as a form of crisis management undesirable for both sides, becomes nevertheless possible.

The situation in Poland between the summer of 1980 and at least Jaruzelski's assumption of the premiership was characterized by a highly unstable pluralist milieu typical of periods of dissolution of other dictatorships.[46] There was a high degree of conflict and the coexistence of interest associations of all types.[47] The situation is characterized by several existing "projects" to institutionalize a more stable set of relations among social groups:

(A) To suppress the 1980 movement, even at the cost of Soviet intervention. This is the strategy of sections of the party apparatus, but not of the whole leadership. It is a question of local, regional, middle-level party interests that would have to be sacrificed in any other solution of the crisis. The goal of this strategy is the restoration of monist organizations and interest aggregations.

(B) The most the ruling party can aim for without outside intervention is a compromise in which other major social institutions such as the church, the union and perhaps the military would be allowed to participate. Limitation of public discussion would allow this to function not only in a compulsory and conflict-free manner, but also by preserving the undisputed primacy of the party-state. This is the state corporatist solution.

(C) Some Catholic intellectuals powerful in Solidarity (such as Wojcicki) favor depoliticization of society, restricting the independent union to narrower concerns and concentrating the movement on culture. This is modelled after the Catholic church's role during the last decade and represents a societal corporatist alternative. It differs from state corporatism because of its insistence on the independence of institutions and, in particular, on a public sphere guaranteeing not only the population's cultural autonomy, but also a structure of compromise involving genuine controls on state activities.

(D) The first of the two alternatives defended by KOR (in particular Michnik) can be characterized as societal pluralism, or pluralism restricted to civil society. Accepting the monolithic structure of the state, this alternative projects independent, horizontal negotiation and compromise among significant institutions of a destatized but not depoliticized society as the starting point of unified negotiations with state power. The independent political activity of society distinguishes this from the model in (C), though the results of compromise here would also be controlled by a pluralistic and uncensored public sphere.

(E) The second alternative defended by KOR (in particular Kuron) differs from (D)

may ask, as does Janos, *op.cit.*, whether societal corporatism (i.e., local and workers' control) represents conflict resolution primarily in areas defined as non-strategically central by the ruling party (whose central concerns are organized according to monistic or state corporatist criteria).

46. This is how Schmitter characterizes the post-Franco epoch in Spain (*op.cit.*, p. 127). In fact, the example of Spain has come up several times in the writings of the Polish opposition — especially Michnik.

47. There were interest associations that were monistic (the party and its transmission belts), old corporatist (the church), modern corporatist (the army), pluralist (unions, associations of intellectuals, students and peasants) and syndicalist (locally or production-based councils and cooperatives).

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because it de-emphasizes the state in actual policy making, but also stresses a self-democratizing society on a plurality of levels — all of which actively participate in policy making. Lacking a better name, such an arrangement could be called syndicalist and would reduce the existing party-state to the execution of the will of society in internal affairs, and to the will of the Soviet Union in external affairs (Finlandization).

(F) Finally, the "revolutionary" alternative of the KPN (Moczulski) is political, parliamentary pluralism that presupposes the political power of Poland's traditional parties. Applying exclusively Western models, this solution would also have no interest in the new forms of democracy that have emerged in Poland, nor in a politicized version of civil society. Given the nationalist character of this alternative and its incompatibility with any promise with the ruling party-state, it would immediately lead to Soviet intervention.

Given the constant danger of Soviet intervention and the undoubted hegemony in Polish society of the democratic movement, the six alternatives reduce to two serious ones: societal corporatism with elements of state corporatism, and societal pluralism with elements of syndicalism. The following table indicates some key differences:

	corporatist	pluralist
1. No. of significant groups	small, fixed	larger, unfixed
2. Structure	hierarchical	generally non-hierarchical
3. Conflict potential	non-competitive	competitive
4. Relation to politics	some state controls over leadership selection, demand articulation (at least in form of veto)	self-managing, no state controls whatsoever over elections and demand articulation.
5. Ideological affinity	nationalist, Catholic	liberal, democratic, democratic socialist
6. Organizational principle	authoritarian, state socialist	dual power, preserving authoritarian state socialism in state sphere
7. Immanent evolutionary trend	state corporatist	democratic syndicalist

The aims of the democratic movement and the ruling party are clear enough. Assuming that either would prefer the solution of its Polish opponent to Russian intervention,[48] the question reduces to an immanent Polish balance. But the problem is more complex, because the existence of the corporatist alternative is itself backed by

48. Unfortunately, this cannot be assumed in the case of the party where the apparatus must be distinguished from the leadership — not to speak of the rank and file, which may prefer the more democratic alternative in any case.

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threat of Soviet intervention. Since this model is a half-way step toward the state corporatism achieved by other Eastern European regimes preserving the authoritarian state socialist organization principle, it can be considered Poland's best hope to avoid its allies' "fraternal" help. Nevertheless, given the already existing level of democratization of Polish society, the ruling party cannot impose its model by itself.

The ruling party can have a corporatist solution only with the help of allies. In this respect the Catholic Church is crucial. Although it is part of the anti-state movement, the church's emphasis on social order and its internal hierarchical organization may predispose it toward corporatism. While old corporatist in structure, this does not prevent it from participating in a neo-corporatist structure of compromise any more than in several other Catholic countries. Neither the church's past nor its present provides unambiguous clues to its future. An integral part of the authoritarian republic before the war, in the post-war period it was the only legal institution of an independent civil society. The democratic opposition is therefore right to point to the church as a model of an independent institution under totalitarianism able to exert pressure and to enter into acceptable compromises with state power.[49] Although an element of civil society, the church represents both the old civil society of privileged orders and the modern one based on legal equality and individual rights. It opposes the communist established church with its atheistic state religion in the name of religious freedom (hence, the separation of church and state). It also fights, however, in the name of some of its lost privileges, and as an alternative established church seeking recognition on the level of public law as it was through the 1925 Concordat.[50] Such a legal status entails an increasing role in the educational system and in family legislation (concerning divorce, abortion, etc.).

Facing a power both militantly atheistic and theocratic, this ambiguity initially amounted to little except in relation to democratic left critics of the regime. As Michnik shows, this relation improved.[51] While until 1968 the church hierarchy was regarded by the secular left as reactionary, and the latter's opposition to the regime was seen by the church as a family quarrel among its enemies, the battle for human rights in the 1970s has provided a minimum framework of unity. In this context, the church's struggle for legality, free public expression and association — hence for the restoration of civil society — complemented the democratic movement, not to speak of the more immediate protection it afforded members of opposition groups.[52]

The history of relations between the church and state power is also a series of compromises exhibiting several constants:[53] the gradual violation of the terms of the relation by the regimes of Bierut, Gomulka and finally Gierek; the Vatican's pressure from John XXII on, for a more flexible church policy toward the state; the pressure of collaborationist lay Catholic groups (PAX, ODISS) for a compromise on the basis of

49. Cf. A. Michnik, *L'Eglise et la Gauche. Le Dialogue Polonais* (Paris, 1979) and "Was die Polen von dem neuen Papst erwarten" in *Opposition ohne Hoffnung, op.cit.* See also Kolakowski, "Church and Democracy in Poland: Two Views," in *Dissent* (Summer, 1980). See also Kuron's characteristically different stress in seeing the Catholic movement as one among several, in "Pour une Platforme," *op.cit.*, pp. 126-127.

50. Stefan Cardinal Wyszynski, "Der Geist des Evangeliums in der Organisation des Gesellschaftlich-beruflichen und des öffentlichen Lebens in Polen," in Dross, ed., *Polen. Freie Gewerkschaften im Kommunismus?* (Hamburg, 1980), p. 114.

51. *L'Eglise et la Gauche, op.cit.*

52. Cf. Rupnik, *op.cit.*, Drawicz, *op.cit.*, and in particular, Michnik, "Was die Polen von dem neuen Papst erwarten," *op.cit.*

53. For this history, see Anna Kaminski, "The Polish Pope and the Polish Catholic Church," in *Survey* (Fall 1979).

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the totalitarian status quo; and finally, the staunch resistance of the episcopate to all attempts to change its anti-totalitarian line — its defense of civil society in the broadest possible sense.

As a result, the compromises that worked did so in periods of the regime's weakness and search for new legitimation (after 1956 and 1971). The significance of these compromises must not be underestimated: in the process, a minimum of independent parliamentary representation, a small independent if censored press, and a network of discussion clubs were allowed to emerge. To a great extent, the activities of Catholic representatives, press and clubs prepared the ground for cooperation between the secular democratic opposition and the church. As a result, the whole climate of Polish Catholicism underwent a significant transformation. With the development of a democratic opposition no longer hostile to the church, the political role of Catholic intellectuals also changed. From parliamentary representation seeking reforms of the system from above to advising Solidarity is a long journey. Throughout, however, Catholic intellectuals have insisted that the pressure from outside ruling institutions not be political. While today this may reduce to merely a semantic point, the continuity of language expresses the continuity of something else: the position of Wyszynski and the episcopate.

The church opposes a conflict-oriented struggle even for demands that it supports. The formula "our land should be neither one of disorder nor of political prisoners"[54] captures this, at a time when only the strike weapon can free political prisoners. Concerned with the nation's security but basing himself on Catholic social doctrine, Wyszynski gave an unheeded sermon (August 26) asking for a return to work. The primate and the episcopate clearly supported the August demands, but were ambiguous about the use of the strike weapon.[55] Since then, the church hierarchy has played a cautious, temporizing role. This has resulted in attacks and a general hostility toward KOR.[56] Thus, upon Walesa's return from Rome (January 19, 1981), he announced the termination of KOR's advisory role, which, however, has not been fully carried out. Nevertheless, on March 5 the regime expressed its gratitude to the episcopate for helping stabilize the situation in response to Jaruzelski's plea for three months of labor peace. Finally, at the time of the temporary arrests of Kuron and Michnik as a result of formal government proceedings against KOR, the episcopate again declared (March 13) its opposition to "disorder" — although in the context of supporting the independent union for peasants and agricultural workers.

Given the regime's present weakness, hence its willingness to deal with the church, the following possibilities[57] are open to the episcopate: (1) The acceptance of an unprecedented level of confessional liberty as a price of political passivity — a modern version of the position represented in Poland by the discredited group PAX and elsewhere (e.g., Hungary) by the arrangements accepted by the church. (2) The search for a new authoritarian solution in which Catholicism would somehow become the

54. Quotation from a declaration of the episcopate, March 13, in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, March 14-15, 1981, p. 5.

55. Compare Wyszynski, "Verantwortung, Pflichten und Rechte im Leben der Nation" and "Kommuniqué des Zentralrats des polnischen Episkopats," both of August 26, 1980, both in *Polen, op.cit.*, pp. 158-159 and pp. 161-163.

56. Father Orszulik, spokesman for the episcopate, had declared that KOR "increases social tensions and angers Poland's neighbors" according to *Der Spiegel*. According to Michnik, he represents only part of the episcopate (cf. "Die Letzte Chance," *op.cit*).

57. These three alternatives are presented by Michnik in "What We Want," *op.cit.*, which reveals a more critical attitude than his book on the same subject.

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basis of a new type of ideologically monolithic but now nationally legitimate political order. Here the efforts during the 1970s of the group ODISS seeking an alliance with the nationalist, anti-semitic Moczar wing of the party is significant. (3) Refusing to make a separate deal, the continuation of the battle for a pluralistic solution that would involve a continued separation of church and state, and the defense of other forms of institutional autonomy in society. This is the position of Catholic intellectuals advising Solidarity (Mazoviecki, Cywinski and Wojcicki), as well as related clubs and journals.

Since the church sees itself as the main defender of Polish national identity, the PAX line or any contemporary version of it is clearly unacceptable to the hierarchy because of its different and even compromising stance on the issue of national sovereignty. Also, for the moment, democratic Catholic intellectuals are setting the tone for the church as a whole. Thus, what Michnik called the Iranization of Poland is unlikely. But what happens if adherence to the third alternative is interpreted as increasingly threatening the national economy and sovereignty? A neo-corporatist solution may become relevant. It could be a synthesis of alternatives (2) and (3), i.e., the defense of a form of plurality where conflict is avoided on the basis of national considerations by means of a set of compulsory compromises in which major (and therefore bureaucratic) social organizations alone participate.

The structure of the Polish church as well as its relation to civil society predispose it to an authoritarian solution — as long as such a solution is not anti-national or, of course, anti-Catholic. This is often disregarded by the democratic opposition because of its desire to preserve its new alliance with the church. Is the church an "unyielding repository of traditional libertarian values" or is it interested primarily in defending its own particular interests since its internal record on civil rights is rather dismal?[58] Does it condemn militance from below only because of its fear of Soviet intervention, or also because of its own conception of social order? Would the church, as Gross implies, be willing to suspend its support for the democratic movement in return for significant privileges? While today the church is "the strongest and weakest link in the coalition of liberalizing forces. . . the only partner able to enter into a separate peace with the regime," its hierarchy does not alone represent Polish Catholicism and Catholic intellectuals in the democratic movement. This should not make "the secular left" forget that according to Cywinski, the Polish church hierarchy, once that of a Constantinian church (state church) today represents a Julian church (the temporarily disestablished and persecuted church under Emperor Julian the Apostate).[59] In intransigent opposition to state persecution, it waits to be restored not in its economic and political privileges but as the established moral authority in the life of the nation. Hence its solidarity with society is conditional. The church's renunciation of its Julianism, i.e., solidarity with the independent social efforts, has so far occurred in the framework of a defensive tactic of unification of all opposition in order to restore civil society. But what holds for a defensive tactic may not hold for an offensive one when legitimate state authority is in shambles.

For the moment, the church could test its inclinations toward a neo-corporatist

58. For some of this record, see Hans-Hermann Hücking and Marek Tadeusz Swiecicki, "Die laizistische Linke — ein Verbündeter für die Kirche?" in Sozialistisches Osteuropakomitee, *Polen 1980* (Hannover, 1981), pp. 81-84.

59. Cf. A. Michnik, *L'Eglise et la Gauche, op.cit.*, pp. 114ff. But even Michnik does not always pay sufficient attention to the arguments he reproduces from Cywinski's *Généalogies des insoumis,* perhaps for tactical reasons.

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compromise with the third potential partner for such a solution: the independent union. So far, combined government and church pressure to separate Solidarity from the democratic opposition seems to have failed. Today Solidarity is organizationally quite different from the church and the ruling party: it is a mix of syndicalist and pluralist structures. Thus, successful pressures on its leadership run into resistance on the part of the participating rank and file. Only a bureaucratic hierarchical restructuring, with state and-or church influence on the selection of the leadership could make it a viable neo-corporatist power. To their credit, the Catholic intellectuals advising Solidarity have emphasized,[60] along with KOR, the struggle against bureaucratization. The unions' refusal to take on management functions is part of this struggle for an independent, democratic organization whose leadership is not institutionally separated from its membership -- hence a model of a different version of civil society than the church's. Will the church learn to accept this model or, better, that of a pluralist civil society capable of accommodating different types of institutions of interest intermediation? While today Solidarity is under pressures, so is the church.

While the church's answer to the question of social alternatives depends on several agents of which the hierarchy is only one, the party-state's needs with respect to the church can be extrapolated from the dynamics of the present crisis. In the midst of a deep legitimation crisis, the regime does not have sufficient loyalty to impose an autonomous authoritarian solution. It also lacks the popular support needed to reform the economy that would require restraining both consumption and conflict.[61] Given the uselessness of Marxism-Leninism, or of technocratic reformist ideology, the key to any policy not relying on Russian military intervention is the reactivation of the third component of that ideological grab-bag employed by all authoritarian socialist ruling parties: nationalism. The re-emergence of Moczar, the appointment of Jaruzelski as prime minister, the convergence of anti-semitic slogans of the Moczar people and of the far right KPN opposition (vigorously repudiated by Solidarity) point in this direction. But in Poland it is the church that holds the keys to the nation. Clearly, it is inclined to give the regime a chance to revitalize the economy and preserve national sovereignty: hence its support for the call of no strikes for three months after Jaruzelski's taking office. But the regime will have to start doing something with this opportunity other than merely repressing dissidents. Unlike in the Soviet Union,[62] nationalist legitimation in Poland may not be an alternative to economic reforms, but only its complement or result.

Socialist Civil Society?

In spite of having had some of the foremost market socialist theoreticians (Lange, Lakecki, Brus and Lipinski), and two periods of intense discussions concerning economic reforms (after 1956 and 1971), Poland has not undergone any sustained decentralization when compared to, for example, Hungary. While the hardening of the ruling parties against reforms after 1968 was a general Eastern European phenomenon, the Polish solution to avoid reforms was unique. Given the existing

60. Cf. T. Mazoviecki, "Les tâches de Solidarité," in *L'Alternative* (January-February 1981).

61. The opposition suggests that full democratization in the spirit of August 31 could provide the regime with the credibility needed to undertake economic reforms. This solution, however, is the greatest threat to the system's organizational principle since it implies dual power. Only under constraint, and if the regime has no better alternative, will this be accepted.

62. Cf. V. Zaslavsky, "Why Afghanistan?" *Telos* 43 (Spring 1980), pp. 139-141; and C. Castoriadis, "Facing the War," *Telos* 46 (Winter 1980-81), pp. 43-61.

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overcentralized structure, it resulted in massive indebtedness to the West leading first to a dramatic upturn, and then to disaster. After the events of 1980, everyone in Poland today is speaking of economic reforms.[63] Serious economic reforms in Eastern European countries, however, are never determined by economic considerations. The reasons why these economies have not been decentralized are not because of fear of adverse economic consequences nor because of the dogmatic belief of the ruling party in its ridiculous doctrines. Up to now, no fool-proof method has been found for the combination of a largely destatized economy and the preservation of the ruling institution. Yet, the crisis of planning rationality has intensified. Thus, in principle, economic reforms remain on the agenda, while alternative forms of crisis management dominate.

Economic reforms in Eastern Europe can be seen as part of the transition since Stalin's death from positive subordination of all social spheres to the party-state, to negative subordination — a lower level of penetration, preserving the functional primacy of the party-state. Most analysts are right to concentrate on the economy (where the transition is from extensive to intensive development) not because this transformation necessarily brings about a general liberalization but because of the opposite: economic decentralization of authoritarian state socialism is possible (e.g., Yugoslavia), leaving the system's organizational principle intact. As in the Yugoslav example, however, having withdrawn from the centralized management, the party-state must seek its legitimacy elsewhere than in "rational redistribution" and "substantive material justice." Secondly, the ruling party must preserve its functional primacy in social organization, culture as well as state administration in order to fulfill the "leading role of the party." Finally, in such a situation, economic reforms are not initiated from above unless the party-state's relation to the economy can be separated from the rest of society. The legal conditions of a decentralized economy alone cannot be allowed to develop into a full-fledged system of private law without endangering the real basis of the leading role of the party: its power of arbitrary intervention.

The difficulty in satisfying these three conditions explains the oscillation between partial decentralization and recentralization in all Eastern European societies. In Poland the first two conditions have been absent. Thus, attempts at reform always came (or were feigned) in the wake of popular risings. A charitable interpretation of Gierek's economic manipulations is that he hoped to achieve the necessary legitimation for reforms through a prior dramatic improvement in the standard of living. If so, the timing was totally wrong. At any rate, today in Poland all the conditions necessary for economic reforms from above are absent. Does this mean the impossibility of significant economic reforms because of the "leading role of the party"?

In Poland today structural reforms from below have altered the conditions for economic decentralization. The leading role of the party *vis-à-vis* social organization and culture has been greatly diminished. As a result, both reforms and non-reforms

63. There seem to be at least four proposals around, of which three are from government related agencies and close to Brus' market socialist *cum* workers' control formula of the 1960s, while the other focuses on the shift of priorities to consumption in general and agriculture in particular. There are also the expected differences between the two types of proposals in terms of who is to formulate reforms: the government (and Sejm) or the union and its experts along with the government. Cf. "Vorschläge für eine neue Wirtschaftspolitik" in "Polen 1980," *op.cit.*, pp. 63ff. The major difference among the proposals is timing. Solidarity wants the whole package including workers' control from the beginning to avoid the bitter experience of post-1956 and post-1971 reform proposals.

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have apparently become impossible. After long hesitation, the party may ultimately reject economic decentralization since today the primacy of the party-state over society is limited to economic planning and management. Any retreat there may precipitate a serious identity crisis within the party — possibly an internal split reminiscent of 1956 and 1968, to be followed by Soviet intervention. The leading role of the party would be practically meaningless if the state gave up its economic functions.

Yet, to avoid economic reform would also be a disaster. How can an already bankrupt economic system plagued by elementary shortages (the socialist version of inflation) survive the fact that its most powerful economic agent is an independent labor union that cannot in the long run avoid battling for the standard of living of its members, i.e., their real wages? Aside from all the reasons for the system's decentralization,[64] independent unions require independent management to resolve local demands according to local interests. With the state as the ultimate manager, local management, far weaker than the associated unions, either gives in since it does not foot the bill alone, or it defers to the state, causing every economic conflict to become immediately a political one. In the present centralized context, even temporary workers' self-restraint only postpones the day of reckoning. Efforts to increase productivity yield very little given the conditions of capital utilization in such economies.[65] Thus, the system cannot solve its economic crisis without significant decentralization.

It is absurd to speculate about possible ways out of this dilemma, but it is also irresponsible simply to paint a hopeless picture. The way out may be the acceptance of economic reforms as the system's crisis management. The economy must be decentralized, notwithstanding its consequences. This means the autonomy of branches, the gradual elimination of unproductive units, a high degree of market determination of most, if not all, prices, a shift of priorities in favor of demand, i.e., consumer goods sector and agriculture, horizontal links among units, etc. For such a policy to be instituted, unions must give it breathing space by restraining economic demands. The lesson of 1980 is that such self-restraint can be converted into political demands. The next foreseeable period should be one of syndicalist organization building rather than pluralist interest conflict. One of the results of this could be worker self-management of industry and institutional arrangements whereby societal associations negotiate with the state concerning economic plans. This is because, in order to satisfy the conditions imposed by the party-state's political collapse, the economy would have to remain a planned state socialist one in the sense of the economic reformers of the 1960s.[66] In other words, it is not enough for the opposition to prevent the party-state from falling apart — as Kuron ironically suggested; it must also be left with something to do. Within the context of dual power as *de facto* established in Poland, it is in the economic sphere that the power and self-identity of the existing system must be preserved. This is possible only through the continuation of macro-economic planning. Is this concession purely tactical? This question can be tackled by raising two others: is a socialist civil society desirable and possible? And what is the road to it in Poland?

Following Szelenyi's suggestion,[67] it is possible to go beyond Kolakowski's position

64. Cf. Wlodzimierz Brus, *The Economics and Politics of Socialism* (London, 1973), for some of the best summaries.

65. Marc Rakovski, *Towards an East European Marxism, op.cit.* See also Antonio Carlo, "The Crisis of Bureaucratic Collectivism," in *Telos* 43 (Spring 1980), pp. 3-32.

66. Cf. Brus, *op.cit.*, pp. 35ff.

67. "Socialist Opposition in Eastern Europe: Dilemmas and Prospects" in *Opposition in*

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whereby efforts to establish the state and civil society duality necessarily lead to authoritarianism, and maintain that a socialist civil society would be a more consistent realization of the goals of 18th century democratic revolutions than contemporary bourgeois-capitalist civil society. Unfortunately, without historical examples to rely on, literature concerning a socialist civil society is necessarily sparse. Such a future literature needs to explore the possibilities of: (1) the non-identity between private law and private property; (2) market without capital formation, and planning without authoritarianism; (3) plurality without corporatism — indeed, syndicalist plurality of self-managing entities; (4) critical publics in a world of mass communications; (5) a structure of political compromise among particular, independent units that encompasses the universal; (6) the reduction of political and economic bureaucracy to purely technical, administrative functions under the control of democratic assemblies; and (7) a fruitful combination of direct and parliamentary democracy.

Some of these, of course, were the concerns of early modern political theory, while some are more modern. Are they hopelessly irrelevant? This paper has sought to show the possibility of points (3), (4), and (5); reject point (7), while acknowledging point (6) as one of the givens of the Polish situation. A socialist civil society cannot be established in today's Poland. But, barring Soviet intervention, is what in formation a socialist version of civil society? Previous arguments here established only the possibility of the emergence of a radically democratic model of society.

The part of the Polish opposition that describes itself as democratic socialist, i.e., KOR and the Solidarity leadership, has repeatedly described its goals as compatible with socialism. This, however, has meant only unwillingness to restore former owners or to abolish the social welfare system. To this Walesa adds only: "Socialism is a good road. But it should be a Polish road." KOR does not say much more. Even the need to combine parliamentary democracy (that need not be incompatible with public ownership) with direct democracy is stressed only by Kuron, though workers' interest in autonomous self-management is clear enough. Yet, even this amounts "only" to radical democracy.

The restoration of capitalism was and remains unacceptable to explain the development of Eastern European societies, whose new organizational principle is authoritarian state socialism. The same may not be true for the institutionalization of yet another "contradictory" model of civil society in the hypothetical situation that this organizational principle were abolished — or even in case the consolidation of dual power resulted in a destatized economy composed of self-managing units horizontally related through a self-regulating market.[68] Though industrial democracy is incompatible with Western capitalism, is it in principle incompatible with the emergence of new forms of dependence and inequality? The question is serious, given the power of the world capitalist economy to which Poland now in part belongs. Free of the threat of external intervention, in Poland it would be the task of workers' parties as well as other groupings in a freely elected Sejm to preserve socialism, including projects of equalization.

Eastern Europe, op.cit., pp. 200ff.

68. For a different formulation of the problem that stresses socialism as self-managing society (what I called radical democracy), see Ferenc Feher, "Eastern Europe in the '80s," *Telos* 45 (Fall 1980), p. 17. But I wonder if socialism, however redefined, may also have to mean the protection of at least some sphere of life through macro-planning. This cannot be the result of radical democracy in the cells of society which represent particular sectoral interests. This allows for the role of planning, supervised by parliamentary compromise, in achieving the universal dimensions of socialism in what could be future democratic socialist systems. This also makes possible a legitimate role for the surviving elements of the *Planstaat* under the next, more democratic stage of state socialism emerging in Poland.

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But today this Poland is impossible. And yet universality, which never emerges spontaneously from plurality, must somehow be represented. The state part of the ruling institution, separated out as an administrative and planning bureaucracy, could assume this function: the representation of the need to preserve and develop the welfare state features of the system. The exclusion of some domains from market principles, the protection of unproductive yet culturally and socially significant enterprises, the prevention of some capital accumulation through laws, the representation of the whole in foreign trade, and indicative, macro-planning of growth, investment, etc., would allow a state to remain the leading force. These are all redistributive functions in the Western sense of redressing inequalities rather than in the Eastern sense of engendering new ones.[69] Of course, the difference could not be left up to the party: the social plans worked out by experts to fulfill these tasks of redistribution could be represented in negotiations in which the party would be only one of the partners, and the others would also be able to rely on experts and present counter-plans. The arrangement would preserve the party's identity as the leading force in the building of socialism, even if it would mean an entirely unprecedented stage of state socialist development.

All of this is highly unrealistic, since the independent union has not proposed anything along these lines. Although it has insisted on participation in the ratification of plans presented by the state on the basis of proposals worked out by its own experts working with its "research institute," Solidarity has made few specific demands relating to structural economic reforms. While its unwillingness to accept unemployment and price rises resulting from rationalization and decentralization blocks the union's acceptance of most readily available reform strategies, its reticence is motivated by something even more fundamental. It would be difficult to preserve the independence of the social sphere if the leading social institution assumed responsibility for state proposals which will necessarily be biased against some social interests — including some of the workers' interests. The institutions of Polish society cannot accept responsibility for present dysfunctions or for the dysfunctions that will inevitably arise from attempts to reform it.

This is strengthened by Solidarity's formal unwillingness to directly participate in governmental reform discussions (though, of course, individuals associated with the union have worked out proposals and even attended as observers discussions of various government task forces). Having restored social organization and, to a lesser extent, culture to civil society, a relative primacy over the economy is left by omission to the state as the token of its continuing social function, as well as the basis of the party's continuing social identity. It can be hoped that the resulting policy will not issue in disaster.[70]

In other Eastern European countries under Soviet rule, even economic reforms from above halt before the specter of civil society. Since civil society has been reconstituted from below, even economic reforms are now possible in Poland. Thus, the Polish democratic movement has placed the program of a socialist civil society, suspended as a result of 1968, back on the agenda of Eastern European alternatives.

69. See Szelenyi, "Social Inequalities in State Socialist Redistributive Economies," in *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* (Spring-Summer 1978).

70. For any sensible policy to emerge, leading forces in the party must realize that the provocations by some of the apparatus and security forces threaten national disaster. Maybe the leadership fears a potentially democratizing movement at the coming extraordinary congress of the party rank and file far more than its conservative elements. Paradoxically, the opposition may be best off with a fundamentally unchanged party that, however, fully honors the Gdansk accords.

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ON THE MATURATION OF SOCIALISM

by Zygmunt Bauman

The Polish events of 1980 took everyone by surprise. Not the least surprised were the main actors of the events. But equally baffled and lost seemed those whose life business is to enlighten the ignorant and to guide the perplexed: the professional students of Eastern Europe and experts on history, politics and sociology of communism. The published commentaries have been remarkable either for their timidity, or for the speed with which the developing situation made them obsolete. Most of them were, first and foremost, strikingly irrelevant to the magnitude of new experience they tried to make meaningful.

And yet, before blaming the experts for being caught unawares, let us admit that their plight was indeed unenviable. We rely on experts as the purveyors of information on steady, circular or repetitive processes. The 1980 Polish events belonged to neither of these categories. They admitted of no comparison with past events, however dramatic. Rare materializations of the Blochian *novum*, they left the experts with past wisdom largely unfit for making this particular oddity familiar. But past wisdom is the experts' only strength and claim to distinction. What else could they do but to reduce the significance of the events to the size of their putative precedents: to a successive change of the ruling guard, to another round in the notoriously inconclusive fight between the "liberals" and the "hardliners," to one more clash between the Kremlin's warmongers and appeasers. However understandable and, at times, called for, these reductions succeeded mostly in shifting the attention away from the new and the unusual. The true significance of the Polish events consists, however, precisely in their novelty.

The actors of the Polish events are, unlike their foreign spectators, acutely aware of sailing uncharted waters. The current fluidity of the Polish situation is only partly due to the natural diffidence of new and inexperienced leaders. None of their predecessors ever confronted problems similar to theirs. Not just the actors are new; the stage itself is built and rebuilt in the course of the performance — and as to the play, its lines are written no sooner than they are spoken.

More than any other communist country at any moment of its history, Poland of 1980 came close to the model of historical creativity, when praxis takes over from structure as the main determinant of events. On a more mundane level of political activity, this means that for some time the course of Polish history will be subject to the method of trial and error; the one method that renders all forecasting ventures superfluous. One should heed Mayakovsky's warning: "Do not paint epic canvasses in the midst of the revolution; you will find that your canvass is torn into pieces."

Hence the admittedly premature nature of the following reflections. They have not been prompted by an (obviously foolish) intention to predict the denouement of the ongoing Polish drama; much less by a presumptuous effort to assess its long-term impact on the shape of modern socialism. These reflections are born of the search for a theoretical vocabulary suitable to articulate the meaning of the recent Polish exercise in history-making. I do not know, and have no way of knowing, how many words in this vocabulary will be found missing, and how many of these present will prove

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redundant.

Perhaps the least expected aspect of Polish events was the determination of the workers to obtain a legal endorsement for an organization defined at the outset only by the fact of being led by the same people who had presided before over a predominantly economic strike; during a long initial period of the struggle, the idea of "free trade union" had few specific attributes except the postulate that the strike committee be made permanent and legitimate. Though unexpected, this development is hardly surprising when looked at, in retrospect, as a logical stage in the process of *historical learning*. Because of the continuity of themes dominating the relations between the workers and the state, one can consider 1970 as the starting point of the learning process which reached its conclusion in 1980.

The winter of 1970 brought the first attempt by the Polish government to update food prices, frozen for too long to preserve any noticeable link with market realities. Workers perceived the move, not without reason, as an attempt to shift the burden of planning mistakes onto their shoulders, and took to the streets to vent their anger. The party leaders of the day (personal responsibility of Gomulka remains a mystery; there is some foundation to suppose that he was tricked into an admittedly suicidal decision by factions working for his demise) commanded the troops to restore order with all means available. The one means evidently available to the troops is to use their guns, which they did. More than a hundred workers were killed, many more wounded. But the only conclusive effect of the massacre was a change in leadership. The new leaders, though greeted with relief and offered some credit of confidence, had to revoke, after brief prevarication, the decisions of their predecessors. Apparently, the workers' strikes and demonstrations brought success. But the cost of victory was high. And victory itself soon proved to be short-lived.

It took the new leaders six years to muster the courage to again try to "rationalize" prices. This time a response by strike was almost automatic. Wary of the consequences, the strikers by and large confined themselves to the action inside their factories and workshops. The reaction by the government was also modified by retrospective wisdom. Price rises were called off without delay. When, however, the jubilant workers returned to their shops, the strike leaders began gradually to disappear; some jailed, some dismissed, some transferred to other jobs.

At the time of the third attempt — this of the summer of 1980 — the government was confronting workers who had learned their lesson. There are several important things they have learned from the experience of their own past practice:

1. The change of leaders matters little, insofar as the conditions in which they carry their office remain unchanged. This is a most important, and perhaps a most difficult, lesson to learn. For it to be accepted, most persistent habits of common sense thinking must be put in abeyance. Common sense, grounded in individual experience, always locked in the network of face-to-face relations and personal bonds, naturally conceives of macro-social structures as magnified primary groups; it cannot account for social changes or for reasons of their absence in any other language but one of personalities, intentions, responsibilities and culpabilities. The passage from such a language to one of structures, institutions and power relations is not attainable within, and from, common sense experience. The forbidden bridge may be crossed only when individual activity rises to the level of historical practice. This is exactly what the decade of harsh training has accomplished for the Polish workers. The advent of Mr. Kania and his associates caused no emotional ripples. The promises of the new leaders were greeted with a stony equanimity. Instead, the workers declared their interest in grounding their

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rights and their hopes in the institutional structure, rather than in good will of their leaders. For all they now care, it does not matter who handles the helm, providing he is not allowed to handle it alone.

2. No victory, however spectacular, of a strike action is likely to move the victors far beyond square one, unless it is institutionalized by making an event into a rule, and transforming what had been originally a breach of the pattern into a law of the land. This important truth seems to have been discovered inadvertently, when pondering the bitter experience of 1976. Successful strikes bring no benefits, if the strikers do not care for the fate of their, now allegedly useless, leaders; hence the security of strike committees must be included into the clauses of the peace treaty. This, however, can be done most efficiently if the strike committees are legalized as permanent labor representatives. Thus, the idea of "free trade unions" was born — not so much as an imported novelty, but as a natural, though unanticipated, product of collective learning.

3. The cumbersome and inert system of the party dictatorship cannot be expected to generate, by its own momentum, forces and actions required to heal the ailing country. The succession of economic policies, new faces and new starts petered out in the quagmire of the "general impossibility." Each successive anti-corruption campaign and moral purge was wrecked by the forces apparently stronger than any number of well-wishers. One thing the dictatorial system can be relied upon to consistently produce when left to its own resources, is more social inequality, more nepotism, more corruption. If at all, this system can be goaded into self-correction only if pushed from outside; it is important, therefore, for the forces of renewal to remain stoutly outside the system. Whoever joins the system to repair it from inside, will inescapably end up reproducing the conditions of its perpetuation. "Inner-party democracy" is not possible without democracy outside the party. The "inner-party democracy" must be forced upon the party by casting it into a field of articulated fores which it does not dominate.

None of these truths seems particularly novel. Indeed, they sound familiar, if not trivial, to any participant in socialist discourse. In Poland, most of these ideas were raised in the public debate in 1956, and then again by the intellectualist dissent of the 1960s. What is novel — quite unprecedented, in fact — is that these truths have now informed the practice of a genuine, indigenous labor movement; that in their defense workers were prepared to strike and to stay on strike long after their economic, "corporatist" demands have been met.

This new workers' practice throws a new light on the mechanism of the "enlightenment process." The lesson one could draw from the dramatic experience of Poland is that collective learning and historical praxis are indeed inseparable; that the first is not possible without the second; and that, consequently, clarification of issues within intellectual discourse can be seen as a hypothetical anticipation, simulation, condition perhaps of emancipatory action — but on no account as its substitution in the structure of enlightenment. True collective learning is an aspect of collective action.

Another surprising feature of the Polish events is the workers' determination to "*depoliticize*" their action and their consistent effort to devise a non-political linguistic medium in which to articulate their social identity and action program.

Most observers, for obvious reasons enclosed within the selfsame political language which the workers of Poland wished to escape, hastened to accomodate and domesticate this unusual behavior by articulating its meaning as one more move in a political game. Thus, the emphatic refusal of a political definition has been interpreted as an attempt to avoid a head-on clash with the party and, more importantly, to placate the suspicious

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eastern neighbor. Conversely (though with striking inconsistency), the stubborn refusal of "free trade unions" to acknowledge party supremacy in their statutes was seen as an attempt to gain an independent enclave on the country's political map.

Such interpretations are not entirely unhelpful. They capture an important aspect of Polish (and, indeed, the East European) reality: the political monopoly of the communist party renders any act of independence, any escape from unconditional submission, political. "Politicization" of life is a direct outcome of the state's determination to retain monopoly of economic, social, and cultural initiative. In this sense — the sense defined by the project of the party dictatorship — the demand of new trade unions to be "free" is indeed political.

And yet such interpretations miss the most remarkable feature of the Polish venture: the attempt to alter the language of social discourse, to redefine social action, to construct a new, hitherto non-existing vocabulary that would allow large parts of social problems to be articulated independently from, and in no relation to, the ruling party concern with its monopoly of political power. Such a new language of social discourse would hopefully render wide areas of social and cultural life immune to the political definitions which remain the exclusive domain of the ruling party as long as the political system remains one of a party rule.

Following closely the many public statements made by the new unions' leaders, reading what they say and what they refuse to say in the many press interviews and discussions, one is struck by the consistency of the refusal to be drawn into a political discourse and to accept the fitness of political language to articulate their identity. "We do not have any political program"; "It is not for us to judge whether the government's policy is right or wrong"; "Politics is a business of the politicians; we are not political animals." This is a language of the radical disengagement from political discourse, rather than of a political conquest. The general impression is that the leaders of the new unions have conceded the political domain to the party in power; that they are only too acutely aware that the rules of the political game, the grammar of political language, are so constructed that they automatically reproduce and perpetuate this party's domination. They seem to know that as partners in political debate they do not stand a chance; they seem to have learned by heart the bitter lesson of their failed political assault on Gierek in Szczecin shipyards in 1971 — the battle Gierek won hands down, just using the language which had no grammatical rules for concept-formation separate from the activity of the communist party.

A common feature of party dictatorship and the feudal body politic is that neither have room for political activity different from the exercising of state power, from being a link in the unbroken chain of command originating at the top of the political hierarchy. Whatever comes within the orbit of politics, is matter-of-factly allocated a place within the chain of command and defined in terms of the allocated office. What distinguishes party dictatorship from the feudal body politic is the former's aspiration to subsume and assimilate the totality of society and culture in all its manifestations. The outer limits of body politic are in both systems undefined and left at the discretion of the rulers; but the feudal rulers had neither a need nor the means to push the limits as far as the modern dictators must and can.

Students of the communist society, as well as almost all dissident forces within this society, traditionally assumed that the movement away from the stultifying monopoly of political power would lead through a political conquest; through changing the rules of political game; through a division of political power. The remarkable originality of the Polish workers' strategy stems from the realization that the political game cannot be

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reformed, as any reform can be brought about only by application of the rules, while the rules are such that they assure their own perpetuity by assimilating any new growth into the existing body politic. Hence, meeting the ruling party on its own, political, ground means losing the battle before it started. The hope to loosen the dead grip of dictatorship lies elsewhere: in winning legitimacy for a non-political language. In the vindication of the right to speak of a wide range of social and cultural issues (and economic issues for this matter) in a language free of political connotations. In asserting, by the same token, the exclusion of such issues from the actual or potential domain where the will of the party rules supreme.

Any reader of Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks* will easily recognize in the Polish workers' strategy an attempt to conquer a territory for *civil society*. Communist rule in Russia began without any vestige of a civil society. To be sure, in Russia there had never been anything remotely resembling the ramified, ebullient, vigorous civil society known from Western experience; such a society was just beginning to emerge in Russia when its inchoate, still brittle shoots were smothered under the debris of the crumbling state, which through most of Russian history had carried out well-nigh single-handedly the task of patching together the jelly-like, weakly articulated society. Coming into a society which was lacking in a civil society of any importance — i.e., one likely to make its resistance felt — the new communist leadership slipped easily into the ready-made pattern of a mostly state-integrated system. The absence of a civil society undoubtedly facilitated the process.

The half-hearted attempts in the Soviet Union to generate a civil society of sorts "from above" came abruptly to an end in the late 1920s. The decision to speed up the pace of development forcing a reticent society into an alien industrial frame could be implemented only by elevating the state to the role of the system's sole integrating factor: to shelve the dreams of hegemony on behalf of unconcealed domination. From that point on, the sociopolitical history of the Soviet Union could be interpreted as a continual, ruthless, and vigilant effort to prevent the emergence of a civil society. The state foreclosed the position which otherwise could have been occupied by a civil society, and an enforced mobilization replaced ideological resonance and became the state's virtual "second nature." The efforts continue now in the form of state repressions against intellectual dissent — these truly prodromal symptoms of a civil society about to be born.

The post-war political colonization of Eastern Europe by the Soviet Union came on the top of a well-entrenched civil society in at least some of the colonized countries. There was already an institutionalized network of social debate mediating between the level of "popular folklore" and the central value cluster supporting the state structure. The imported Soviet pattern squared ill with a society integrated in such a complex way. Hence, the post-war history of most East European countries can be seen as a series of efforts to subdue or eradicate civil society already in existence. The efforts were never fully successful; clearly, the Leninist concept of a socialist revolution had been made to measure for a society held together by a political scaffolding alone, and can offer little guidance for a society with a richer texture. The battle for the transformation of civil society into an agency of political state is still ongoing and unresolved.

The campaign of "depoliticization" waged by the Polish workers can be interpreted as an attempt to regain the lost autonomy for civil society. Such attempts are not new. They were repeatedly made by the intellectuals claiming their prerogatives in the field of art, science or education. They also remained notoriously unsuccessful. Apparently, intellectuals are unable to attain cultural autonomy in a society in which no class had

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won independence from the political state. In the West, the intellectuals' cultural domination was secured by the success of the bourgeoisie in constructing a public realm, the sovereignty of public opinion, outside the state apparatus. This historical sequence was not, and could not be, repeated in any of the socialist countries of the East. Polish events open up a new possibility: one of a civil society grounded on autonomy of the public sphere won by the workers.

Such an autonomy seems to be the key idea in all demands articulated by the new unions' leaders and the one idea able to mobilize the factory floor into strike action. Strictly economic demands gave way to the "autonomy" stipulations at a very early stage of the Polish events. What triggers off the most stubborn workers' resistance are government attempts to define union activity as political, and hence falling into the field of competence of the organs specialized in the defense of the monopolistic party rule. Poland came closest to a general strike twice: when the courts tried to rewrite the unions' statutes to suggest that their activity lies on the same plane as that of the communist party, and therefore can potentially clash with its tenets; and when the police arrested two activists of the union implying that at least some aspects of union activity might be defined as politically criminal. This has not been just a natural defense against police harassment; this has been a manifestation of a consistent, and ongoing struggle for the redefinition and relocation of the whole sphere of public debate and public opinion as separate from the state and hence non-political. The struggle was, in other words, for the establishment of a civil society.

The historical novelty of the Polish events consists perhaps above all in the fact that for the first time a process leading from an absolutist state to the separation of civil society from the state is both carried out and led by workers.

The many remarkable and unprecedented features of the Polish events throw a new light on the theory of socialism. They may force the theorists to look again at the old themes long ago proclaimed unpromising and therefore abandoned. By far the most important among such themes is one of the *working class domination.*

The historical practice which allegedly led to the refutation of the "proletarian domination" thesis was one following the Leninist reduction of the complex issue of class domination and hegemony to the struggle for state power. The Marxian idea of the association of free producers (free, among other things, from the state as an organization of an exploiting class set against society) was transformed beyond recognition in Lenin's prophecy of "every cook able to rule the state." The socialist concept of the state as a mere administration, confined to the "management of things" rather than people, was for all practical intents and purposes put into abeyance with the substitution of the state rule of the party for the class domination of the proletariat. The Leninist mask stuck to the face of the original vision so tightly that the ignominy of the first left seemingly indelible marks of shame on the second. Indeed, what the experience of East European socialism seems to have proved beyond reasonable doubt, is that the idea of a proletarian-dominated socialist society is a noble but idle dream; more realistically, it is a smokescreen used to hide a bureaucratic conspiracy. What seems to transpire in the light of the Polish events, however, is that the only "historically refuted" idea has been one of the equivalence between the concept of socialism as domination and hegemony of the working class, and the practice of the party monopoly of state power.

The Polish events opened up a possibility of the revival of the idea of proletarian domination in a form so thoroughly repressed by the long decades of the Leninist practice and hence so completely forgotten, that it was no longer easily recognizable as a

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fulfillment of the original Marxist vision of socialism. Indeed, many an observer could not but whole-heartedly agree with Honeckers and Bilaks proclaiming the anti-socialist character of the Polish workers movement. In their desperate search for appropriate categories to frame and domesticate Polish experience, commentators alternated between a TUC-style love for free market and free collective bargaining, and the "liberal" political opposition to the "socialist" rule of the communist party. The category which seemed the least germane was one of the socialist resistance to bureaucratic dictatorship.

But this is what has been happening in Poland: the workers seeking to establish their hegemony not through another reshuffle of the ruling elite, but through a decisive move to roll back the limits of its power; a proletarian hegemony coming to pass in the result of exemption of social and cultural power from the domination by the state; the hegemony of the workers, like hegemony of any other class in history, establishing itself in its proper domain: civil society.

The Polish events revealed two things at the same time. First, that the supremacy of the communist party is of a purely political nature, and thanks to the political means at its disposal it suppresses the social reality of the society over which it rules. Second, that once the heavy lid of political coercion is removed, the superior strength and socially creative potential of workers becomes the dominant feature of the social landscape.

If the state is just an executive committee of the civil society (and its hegemonic class), then one could expect that a proletarian-dominated civil society would try to model the state according to its own peculiar needs. The model which seems to be promoted in Poland is uncannily familiar to any theorist and bafflingly incomprehensible to any practitioner: a model of administration limited to the "management of things."

This is a battle, and very seldom a single battle can win the war. There are battles, though, which change the objectives and the rules of the war. Undoubtedly, this is one of such battles. At the time I am writing down these reflections, Poland is at the cross-roads and which route will be eventually taken is in no way a foregone conclusion. For once, the fate of Poland is not dependent solely on internal forces. Moreover, the ruling bureaucracy (despite all its past blunders and nearly universal discreditation) is by no means a spent force; it has a large and influential class of people to rely on, interested as it is in its perpetuation. The dreadful economic plight of Poland leaves little room for social experimentation. Many scenarios are, therefore, possible.

One scenario, however, seems utterly improbable. This is a return to the old terms of reference of public debate, in which the new vistas of social change will be closed again and the revealed potentials forgotten. Even if nothing else happens, this alone is enough to record the Polish events among the rare but crucial acts of historic creation.

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AFGHANISTAN, POLAND AND PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE*

by Antonio Carlo

The recent Afghan crisis has jolted the Western world. Many in the West fear an irreversible Soviet turn away from peaceful coexistence and toward expansionism in which Angola and Ethiopia were the logical prelude to actions of direct annexation. Several observers have emphasized growing Soviet difficulty with oil supplies, which could become serious by 1985.[1] It is difficult to determine the extent of bad faith in this obsession with Soviet aggression, but it is clear that it is a patent case of what Fromm called "political double think," where the adversary's behavior appears aggressive, although the same behavior on the part of the West appears logical and natural. Thus, during the 1960s, it seemed completely natural that peaceful coexistence and East-West trade relations grew while the American government systematically destroyed a country of the "socialist" camp (North Vietnam), carrying out acts for which Seiss-Irguart was condemned to death at Nuremberg (bombing of dikes) and in the context of an undeclared war conducted by the U.S. administration.[2] Furthermore, in 1968, when the United States was governed by a conservative Democrat who was not exactly a 'dove,' the invasion of Czechoslovakia, a country much more important than Afghanistan, raised little moral protest from the White House. So why all the fuss now?

Peaceful coexistence never meant the end of disagreements or conflicts: it only meant carrying out permanent negotiations to resolve conflicts and to redefine zones of influence constantly in the sense that a country could pass from one side to the other, i.e., could be defended, conquered or reconquered usually by political maneuvers. Direct interventions such as in Vietnam and Czechoslovakia were also permitted as long as they did not result in a direct military encounter between the superpowers and did not compromise the growth of East-West trade relations, which is one of the main reasons behind peaceful coexistence. Thus, there have been the Indonesian and Chilean coups, the switching of camps of Sadat's Egypt, the battle by proxy in Angola, Ethiopia, as well as Vietnam and Czechoslovakia (not to mention the Cuban missile crisis). These events have created tensions but have never led to a questioning of the framework of permanent negotiation, or East-West economic relations. The Afghan event, on the other hand, with the embargo on two types of products vital for the Soviet Union (grain and technology) represents a change in U.S. policy of coexistence, which had never been seriously questioned since Camp David.

The U.S. justification for the "break" was that Afghanistan was a neutral country and that the Soviet Union had never attacked a neutral country before. This is ridiculous, given that since 1973 Afghanistan had been entirely within the Soviet orbit and that since 1969 it has been clear that the United States was withdrawing from that country. For years, the country's non-alignment has been purely formal, similar to Cuba's (but with a greater political dependency because neither Daud, nor Taraki,

*English translation by Greg Ostrander.

1. See D. Pineye, "La Production Petrolière Sovietique a l'Horizon 1985 — Approche Regionale," in *Le Courrier des Pays de l'Est*, No. 229, pp. 3ff.

2. See N. Chomsky, *The New Mandarins* (New York, 1969).

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nor Amin, nor Karmal had Castro's political prestige) and it is strange that a diplomacy that has always considered Cuban non-alignment false should now discover Afghanistan's neutrality.[3] Thus, the problem is not merely to explain Soviet aggression and the contradictions of Russian policy (invasion of Afghanistan and exaggerated prudence in the case of Poland), but also to account for the turn in American policy.

It has been argued that the Soviet Union undertook the high road of peaceful coexistence of the 1950s and 1960s under Khrushchev and his successors, when the Soviet Union sought collaboration not only with the West but also with the Third World. The failure of this policy in the 1970s (the newly independent national bourgeoisie turned against the Soviet Union) culminated in the Manila Conference, where the Soviet Union was equated with rich capitalist countries.[4] Thus pushed, the Kremlin moved toward retrenchment and defense.[5] Supposedly, the Soviets sought to create in the Third World a series of regimes close to the Soviet Union (of the Ethiopian type) and abandoned the cooperation with national bourgeoisies. This closure in foreign policy was accompanied by a closure in internal policy *vis-à-vis* civil rights.

If there was a change in direction, however, this was brought about by Third World nations and not by the Soviet Union. The reason for this change in attitude is that certain advantages offered by the Soviets to the Third World in the post-1973 commercial situation no longer make any sense for these countries. Yet the Soviets' commercial 'good neighbor' policy with the Third World has not changed. The Soviet Union's trade with the Third World grew 4.1 times during the 1970s. Although constituting an insignificant fraction of world trade, this trade is important for the Soviet Union because it provides a surplus that permits the accumulation of currency to pay off part of its endemic financial debt to the West.[6] The only counter tendency to this is the reduction, in the 1970s, of aid to the Third World,[7] but this is also true for Western nations.[8] This, however, is a result of the crisis of the Soviet economy. On

3. See J.J. Puig and J.C. Victor, "L'Afghanistan, Carrefour du Monde?" in *Les Temps Modernes,* n. 408-9, p. 118ff. See also P. Gentelle, "Afghanistan: Russes et Asiatiques dans la Piege," in *Herodote,* n. 18, p. 82, where it is claimed that in 1969 there were 1100 Russian experts as against only 240 American experts in the country. For quite some time Afghanistan has been a province of the Russian empire and Carrère d'Eucausse is justified in pointing out that the causes of the Afghan invasion are no different than those of 1956 (Hungary) and of 1968 (Czechoslovakia). See H. Carrere d'Eucausse, "L'Afghanistan: un Pion dans la Strategie Mondiale de l'URSS," in *Problemes Politiques et Sociaux,* n. 398, p. 27.

4. On this point, see A. Tirapolsky, "Les Relations Economiques entre les Pays Socialistes Europeans du CAEM et les Pays du Tiers Monde: un Tournant dans la Politique d'Aide Economique?" in *Le Courrier des Pays de l'Est,* n. 236, p. 3ff.

5. A. Guerra, "L'Intervento nell' Afghanistan e i Nodi Irrisolti del Socialismo Sovietico," in *Problemi del Socialismo,* IV series, n. 17, p. 72ff.

6. Cf. Tirapolsky, *op.cit.*, p. 11. In 1979 the Soviet balance of trade with the underdeveloped countries had a surplus of 3,102 million rubles while with the U.S. the deficit was 2,137 million rubles and with Japan 716 million. See also A. Tirapolsky, "Le Commerce Exterieur de l'URSS in 1979," in *Le Courrier des Pays de l'Est,* n. 241, pp. 28-29. It is important to consider the USSR's past trading partners in the third world: the main purchasers are Iraq, Iran, Syria, Egypt, Libya and the major suppliers are Iraq, Iran, Brazil, and India (cf. Tirapolsky, "Les Relations. . . ," *op.cit.*, p. 3). These include neutral, pro-Russian as well as pro-American countries. The case of India is typical: there, economic cooperation has developed constantly for a quarter of a century independently of internal Indian crises such as the fall of Indira Ghandi. Cf. M. Kahn and A. Tirapolsky, "URSS-Inde: 25 Ans de Cooperation," in *Le Courrier des Pays de l'Est,* n. 238, p. 46ff.

7. See A. Tirapolsky, "Les Relations. . . ," *op.cit.*, p. 19.

8. J.P. Dubois and P. Ramadier, "Un Bilan Limite des Relations Entre la CEE et ses Associes

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the other hand, trade relations continue to grow rapidly and contribute to plugging the holes in the Soviet balance of payments. This explains why the Soviets trade with whoever will offer a good deal, regardless of their political orientation. In relations to the Third World, Soviet policy has not changed since Khrushchev.

On the domestic front it is difficult to see retreat in civil rights as a result of Sakharov's confinement. There were never any real advances: the Stalinist purges have ended, but freedom of opinion and political pluralism have not developed in the post-Stalin epoch. The thaw of de-Stalinization laid the way for coexistence. For internal dissidents, however, it meant the end of the threat of being violently eliminated, but certainly not the end of the danger of a slow death in a prison or a madhouse.

According to Ticktin, the Afghanistan invasion was meant (a) to prevent the growth of an Islamic movement in Russia, and (b) to justify increased centralization of the economy after the failure of the 1965 decentralizing reforms — a turn ideally supported by a military commitment and the accompanying atmosphere of seige.[9] This thesis is also wrong. The first account is based on the "Khomeini syndrome:" since the unforeseen explosion of Islamic movements, many see the Islamic threat everywhere and imagine that even the Soviet Union is obsessed by the image of Tehran's "old terror." But the thesis that Khomeinism could, through the Afghan Islamic guerrilla, spread into the Soviet Union is one that cannot withstand serious scrutiny: revolutions cannot be exported like Persian rugs. It is not that there is no "national question" in the Soviet Union. But the most difficult threat so far has been the Ukrainians. Among the Asiatic nationalities, only the Tartars in Crimea, exiled after 1944 for collaborating with the Nazis, have recently created problems. This minority, however, consists only of 300,000 people.[10] As for the large Islamic minorities, the threat of the Islamic clergy is limited by their non-conflictual attitude toward Soviet power, and their efforts seeking to conciliate Islam with the Kremlin. Such behavior is not just a result of fear of repression: the Shah's SAVAK did not spare repression, yet it did not prevent the radicalization of the Khomeini opposition.[11] That Soviet fear of a possible spread of Khomeinism is at the root of the Afghanistan intervention thus remains to be proven.

The second part of the argument is also defended by Zaslavsky[12] and is somewhat sounder. It was roughly what had happened in the case of the occupation of Czechoslovakia: the Prague reformers sought more than what the Moscow reforms could gain. Thus, the invasion sought to prevent in Prague what they wished to do in

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du Tiers Monde," in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, n. 315, p. 26.

9. See H. Ticktin, "The Afghan War and the Crisis in the USSR," in *Critique,* n. 12, p. 13ff.

10. On these points relative to the national question in the USSR, see H. Carrère d'Eucausse, *L'Empire Eclaté* (Paris, 1979), p. 196ff. and p. 219ff. The Ukranian critique of Great Russian nationalism is at work in J. Dzyuba, *L'Oppressione delle Nazionalita' in URSS* (Rome, 1971). Cf. also Victor Zaslavsky, "The Ethnic Question in the USSR," in *Telos,* n. 45 (Fall, 1980), pp. 45-76.

11. If in the USSR this has not happened, it is due to the fact that the social situation of the Asiatic populations is completely different than in the Mideast. Work and bread are not a problem for Moslems in the USSR as they still are in the Mideast. Precisely in the Iran-Afghanistan border region, in Uzbekistan, Moscow's industrialization policy has succeeded and resulted in standards of living much higher than in the Mideast. Thus, while there is dissatisfaction among Islamic nationalities in the USSR, it is far from breaking into open rebellion. See S. Bensidoun, *Samarcande et la Vallée du Zerafchan* (Paris, 1979); H. Meynaud, "Le Développment Economique de l'Ouzbekistan," in *Le Courrier des Pays de l'Est*, n. 243, p. 3ff.

12. V. Zaslavsky, "Why Afghanistan?" in *Telos*, n. 43, p. 139ff.

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Moscow. The invasion, therefore, was also a warning to sectors of Soviet society.[13] In Kabul, however, there was no Ota Sik whose "experiment" could galvanize Soviet reformist opinion. There remains, then, the argument that an atmosphere of seige was necessary to justify the internal centralization following the failure of the 1965 reforms. Although the new summer 1979 reforms reduced the autonomy granted to enterprises in 1965,[14] they are not a simple return to pre-1965 centralism.

The 1979 reform, in fact, reinforced the powers of the Gosplan[15] and recognized the people's needs for consumer goods. The role of commercial elements is not denied but is reformulated in a way different than in 1965, by increasing the powers of the Gosplan. The trouble is that these mercantile elements conflict with extreme centralization. If one structures production according to the needs of worker consumers, it is necessary to broaden the range of products, thus increasing the complexity of the Soviet economy and rendering it unmanageable in the bureaucratic centralist way. Thus, the Russian economy takes two steps in opposite directions: more state centralism and more respect for the needs of the consumers. But in this policy one half destroys the other. If this is the case, the 1979 reform is not a centralist turn but, rather, the continuation of the old contradiction. The promise to produce an adequate supply of consumer goods is not likely to be met because of the weakness of the Soviet economy. If so, a ruling class squeezed by strikes and continually promising consumer goods that it cannot supply cannot simply rush into military adventures to solve its problems.

It is unlikely that the Kremlin would risk such a danger. Before and after the Afghanistan action, the Soviet Union behaved with prudence and did not act as if under seige. Also, when the Chinese attacked Vietnam, the Soviet Union carefully avoided any military action in what was a perfect occasion for the re-affirmation of the Great Russian nationalism and the seige mentality against the "yellow peril." In 1979, in commentary on the progress of East-West exchanges, Tass emphasized the positive effects of the relaxation of tension.[16] Also in 1979, Brezhnev reduced the Soviet Union's military presence in East Germany.[17] After the Afghan crisis, the Soviet Union did everything to keep channels of communication open with the West (especially with Schmidt and Giscard). At the same time, it continued to increase trade with capitalist countries, such as Canada, Australia and Argentina. Russia did as much as possible to ensure the Western presence at the Moscow Olympics and to create the image of a peaceful, hospitable Russian people, thus completing, in spite of the stumble with the United States, the "charm" operation that the location of the Olympics in Moscow undoubtedly implied. This is not a policy of a country that wishes to close itself up in an atmosphere of seige. In fact, precisely because of a galloping economic crisis, the Soviet Union cannot permit itself the luxury of halting trade with the West. Trade does not solve the problem, but temporarily contains its consequences. Similarly, the Soviet Union cannot opt for expansionism since it would lead to a confrontation with

13. See on this my "The Socio-Economic Nature of the USSR," in *Telos*, n. 21 (Fall, 1974), and my polemic with Ota Sik in my "Capitalism and Crisis in Yugoslavia," in *Telos*, n. 36 (Summer, 1978), p. 105ff.

14. See my "The Crisis of Bureaucratic Collectivism," in *Telos*, n. 43 (Spring, 1980), p. 102ff.

15. See M. Lavigne, "Nouvelle Reforme Economique en Union Sovietique," in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, n. 306, p. 3.

16. Cf. Tirapolsky, "Le Commerce Exterieur...," *op.cit.*, p. 24.

17. T. Shreiber, "L'Operation de Charme de M. Brejnev," in *Le Courrier des Pays de l'Est*, n. 232, p. 49.

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the United States. A militarist policy falling short of serious conflict with the United States but sharpening tension — thus permitting more centralization — is also not a solution. Ultimately, there is no solution and the Russian ruling class does not wish to take this path. Thus, when Ticktin speaks of the Russian ruling class as a "desperate elite in a desperate expansion," he is right only in the first part: the Russian ruling class is really desperate, but mainly because it realizes that a desperate expansion will not solve its problems and that, at any rate, it does not have the strength for desperate expansions.

Soviet intervention in Afghanistan was a defensive intervention into a province of the empire analogous to those of 1956 and 1968. The only difference is that, in Prague, it was also necessary to warn social forces in the Soviet Union who had interests similar to those of the Czech reformers. This logic of empire defense does not represent a break with the policy of peaceful coexistence. In fact, if anyone has gone beyond the tacit American-Soviet understanding, it has been the Americans in Vietnam. For a similar case of Soviet direct military aggression on a non-socialist country one would have to go back to the cases of Finland and Poland in the 1930s. Thus, it was logical for the Soviet ruling class to expect a prudent response on the part of the Americans, analogous to that of 1968 during the Prague events or analogous to that of the Russians in 1973 (Chile) or before, during the Vietnam bombing.

The Afghan invasion is not related to the crisis of Soviet society, but to the normal logic of power that will not allow a province to leave the empire. In 1979, the Afghan army had been seriously weakened by desertions and the rebels were not always Islamic or tribal groups, but in several areas Chinese-inspired.[18] This itself would have been sufficient to justify an intervention of the Hungarian or Czech type. But it quickly became clear that the results in Afghanistan would be different from those of earlier interventions because, although the Soviet crisis is not the cause of the intervention, it conditions its success. Thus, Soviet troop strength has never been estimated higher than 80,000 to 100,000 soldiers in Afghanistan — clearly not comparable to American intervention in Vietnam (where there were 500,000 U.S. troops plus an equal number of soldiers from the South Vietnamese army). Now, the Vietnam experience has shown a huge military force is necessary to defeat a guerrilla insurgence. Even a 5-to-1 advantage is not sufficient because, as Mao and Giap have demonstrated, either the repressive forces control the territory, thereby becoming dispersed and vulnerable, or they concentrate, thus losing control of the territory. Now in a country such as Afghanistan, with a mountainous terrain suitable to guerrilla warfare, and with a state and army in the process of collapse, 80,000 to 100,000 soldiers are not sufficient either to control the territory or to administer a serious blow to already well-entrenched guerrilla forces. Thus, the Russian invasion could not quickly succeed, as in Budapest and Prague, but at most, could only prop up a fratricidal regime by occupying major cities and means of communication. But then why did the Soviet Union not attempt an earlier, more massive invasion?

The answer is that the Soviet economic crisis made it very difficult to make the Russian population accept the need to tighten the already too-tight belt in order to "defend" the discredited regime of a marginal country. Socialist sermons have not convinced Russians to work harder, so it is doubtful whether they can be persuaded to work overtime to defend Karmal. In this context, after 25 years of broken promises of

18. See N. Datarac and M. Levant, "Afghanistan: l'Event des Nationalités," in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, n. 311, p. 7.

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consumer goods, a massive military action and an increase of expenditure for non-consumer goods would only have led to an escalation of the productivity strike. Thus, the Kremlin had to reconcile two contradictory demands: not to ask for too many sacrifices from an already rebellious population, and not to lose a province of the empire. The reconciliation of these two led to the inadequate intervention.

Unlike in the effective 1968 Prague operation, when allies actively participated, now the Soviet Union is alone. This cannot be explained merely by geographical considerations, since a massive airlift of troops to Afghanistan is certainly possible within the Warsaw Pact. Since 1968, however, many things have changed in Eastern Europe. After Yugoslavia legitimated the joint venture with mixed capital in 1967, Hungary followed suit in 1970 and 1977, Romania in 1971, Poland in 1976, and Bulgaria, the country most faithful to the Soviet Union, in 1980.[19] This indicates the presence of capital in "socialist" states. So far, the Russians have never accepted this solution on their own territory. It is symptomatic, however, that the other regimes modeled on the Soviet system no longer copy the motherland of "socialism" even in economic matters. Very often, instead, they seek a direct relation with the West. This is especially true with Poland, which, as a result, has suffered from extreme indebtedness and a weakened economy. As centrifugal tendencies within East European countries grow, so does the crisis of their economic systems. Consequently, the ruling class in these countries are reluctant to follow the Soviet Union into any military adventures.

Thus, the Kremlin would prefer a political solution by creating a model of bureaucratic-collectivist development to generate some consensus for the discredited Karmal regime. But the agrarian collectivization and Soviet centralized planning of 1928 cannot be exported to Afghanistan, where a broad-based guerrilla movement today prevents any serious planning policy. The Soviet Union is confronted with a vicious circle: to launch a policy of planned development the guerrillas must be crushed, but without accelerated development it is impossible to isolate and defeat the guerrillas. Also, Soviet planning is based on the exploitation of the huge Russian agricultural sector. In the case of Afghanistan, however, agriculture is so limited and impoverished that it could not provide a surplus necessary for an accelerated development upon which to base a new consensus.

In Afghanistan, the Soviet Union has no choice but to tax itself to sustain Afghan development. But a country in crisis such as the Soviet Union cannot support the accelerated development of a nation of 14 million to 19 million people. On the contrary, Russian presence often serves to procure for the Soviet Union the goods necessary for its own economy, as is natural in relations between a small, invaded country and a great power. Thus, Afghanistan is a trap for the Russians; a Vietnam from which they can either retreat, thus admitting their own weakness, or can commit themselves more heavily, as the Americans did in Vietnam. But the Soviet Union cannot afford the military expenditures that Americans deployed in the 1960s. If it attempts to do so, the impact on the Russian economy and on the internal social equilibrium will be terrible. Whichever way it goes, the Soviet Union is caught in a deadly trap.

This scenario can be further verified in light of recent Polish events. In Poland, too, there has been a questioning of the Soviet model of development positing the absolute

19. See A. Tirapolsky, "Les Investissements Occidentaux dans les Pays de l'Est," in *Le Courrier des Pays de l'Est,* n. 228, pp. 3ff.

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supremacy of the party. Yet, despite the greater seriousness of the Polish events beginning last summer, there has been no military intervention. Occasional reports of Soviet troop movements have not resulted in an intervention and even during recent critical periods, the Soviet Union has not begun serious preparations for military intervention. Thus, only months after the Afghan invasion, the Soviet bear seems to have been domesticated. But the bear is not really tame: it is ill, and this makes it prudent.

To understand the problem, it is necessary to investigate the nature of the workers' revolt of August 1980 (the third in ten years in Poland) and the threat it poses to East European countries. From the viewpoint of the demands of the Polish workers, they are part of the history of the labor movement: the demand for trade union freedom and freedom to strike is the demand for the legitimation of the class struggle — a typical working class demand. While there have been important militants within the church who have supported advanced social struggles (e.g., Helder Camara and the assassinated Bishop Romero), and in the past even the official church has recognized the legitimacy of certain demands or rights, they flourish outside of the ecclesiastic hierarchy. In the case of Poland, although playing an oppositional role, the church has been extremely cautious *vis-à-vis* the regime. It has dealt with the regime as one power to another, carefully curtailing any mass protest that could slip out of control. On August 26th, during a decisive moment in the struggle, the Polish state television transmitted the homily of Cardinal Wyszynski who called for "moderation and prudence" — an invitation to terminate the struggle before it had realized its objectives. The next day, Catholic workers answered with the spreading of the strike, the radicalization of the conflict, and the breakdown of negotiations.

One of Walesa's interviews during this period is symptomatic of this attitude: "Interviewer: 'What do you think of the pope's and of Wyszynski's declaration?' Walesa: 'I do not have time to listen to these declarations. I live here, not elsewhere. I don't know what they were about. There's too much to do. . . .' Interviewer: 'Are you Catholic?' Walesa: 'Obviously and practicing! That's why I'm here and not elsewhere.' Interviewer: 'Do you think the pope and Cardinal Wyszynski can help the strikers?' Walesa: 'I don't think there should be any interference. This is a different area: the church has other tasks. They do their work and we do ours.' "[20] Thus, in the heat of the battle, Walesa asserts the autonomy of the movement from the church.

The autonomous character of the movement is clear also in the famous 21 points of Gdansk. Point 4 demands the return of the rights to the people fired after the 1970 and 1976 strikes. It also calls for the freeing of political prisoners and, in point 3, there is a demand for freedom of press and expression. It is a democratic program that seeks to make the working class the hegemonic point of reference for the entire opposition — including the left opposition, which plays a key role. Thus Modzelewski, author with Kuron of a ruthless critique of Polish society, inspired one of the statutes of the new union[21] and in Warsaw there are persistent rumors that Walesa receives political advice from a commission of experts led by Kuron.[22]

This movement is a class movement born on the terrain of "classical" democratic

20. See "Cinque Minuti con Lech Walesa tra una Riunione e l'Alta," in *L'Anno della Polonia, Quaderno di Lotta Continua,* p. 30.

21. Cf. J. Kuron and K. Modzelewski, *Il Marxismo Polacco all' Opposizione* (Rome, 1967). Tadeusz Kowalik, a noted Marxist economist and Luxemburg scholar, is also among the advisers to the new union.

22. See F. Bigazzi, "L'Estate Polacco," in *Mondoperaio*, n. 9 (1980), p. 8.

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and working class demands, and there is not a hint of restoration of capitalism or of Catholic integralism. Some have argued that the 21 points will explode the foundations of Polish society, while others see a gradual and democratic reform as possible.[23] The first thesis seems closer to the truth, although it must be supplemented with a structural analysis of the Polish socio-economic system. Poland is an industrial society with a bureaucratic-collectivist regime similar to the Soviet Union. These Soviet-type systems are constitutionally unable to produce enough consumer goods to satisfy the demand of the market. Economic development remains extensive in character so that, to produce the same quantity of goods produced in the West, many more workers are needed. Thus, even in periods of crisis, the demand for labor power always exceeds the supply. In the West, on the other hand, the intensive character of development and high productivity allow wages and consumption to be higher, and thus trade union freedom can be tolerated. This intensive development, however, creates frequent packets of unemployment, thus moderating the demands of employed workers.[24] In Eastern Europe, the situation is the reverse. Extensive development, full employment and a great demand for labor power even during times of crisis are counterbalanced by a low rate of productivity and a low wage scale. This last type of industrial model cannot support trade union freedom. A completely secure work force with trade union freedom can demand wage levels that the system cannot support.

Poland is no exception. According to the 1970 census, of a population numbering 32,589,000, 15,604,000 worked. Demographic expansion, according to the United Nations, was limited (.8 percent per year from 1963 to 1971), and in 1977 the work force grew 15 percent (much more than population growth) to 17,839,000. Thus, although the Polish economy in the 1970s entered into a crisis of indebtedness, employment, already very high, is still increasing. But high levels of employment and trade union freedom do not fit well with low wages and a system structurally unable to produce sufficient consumer goods. The risk is that the entire social equilibrium of bureaucratic centralism will collapse.

This could have been avoided had the reforms advocated in the 1960s by the technocrats been realized. But these reforms were shelved everywhere except in Yugoslavia. These reforms, however, postulated a mechanisms that functions in ways similar to capitalism, even if private property is not formally restored. In such a system, market demand would have a greater role, but it would result in intensive development in which full employment would give way to extensive unemployment, thus fixing wages within the system's limits. Also, these reforms lead to a transfer of power from bureaucrats to technocrats and managers since economic power would reside in the enterprise and not with the national plan. Thus, it is understandable why the Soviet bureaucracy blocked these reforms in allied countries when they went too far (e.g., Czechoslovakia). For these reforms to be implemented, there must be not only a crisis within the central political bureaucracy of the bureaucratic-collectivist system (as in Yugoslavia) but the working class must also be politically and economically weak. If East European workers demand more consumer goods, they do

23. The first thesis (that the demands of the Polish workers are incompatible with the system) is argued by Laura Boella in *Il Manifesto* of September 26, 1980, p. 3; the second (reformist) thesis is typical of the PCI and inspires the supplement on Poland of *Rinascita*, n. 34 (August 29, 1980).

24. Cf. my "Unemployment," in *Telos*, n. 38 (Winter, 1978-79), p. 5ff.

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not thereby reject job security. A conscious and organized working class such as the Polish, which had succeeded in going beyond productivity strikes and had gained respect for trade union freedom, cannot be tricked into considerable reduction through unemployment by a few more television sets. Thus, trade union freedom is a danger for both technocrats and bureaucrats in East Europe. It is an obstacle to the reforms sought by technocrats, and it is a threat to the system run by the bureaucrats. Given this state of affairs, a military encounter even more violent than that of 1968 in Czechoslovakia is to be expected. Instead, there has been nothing. Why?

One answer is that the Soviets were intimidated by the American embargo. But the embargo was a failure, so it did not seriously discourage the Russians. Another answer is that the Polish summer was victorious because it came after the Afghan events. The Soviet Union was in the midst of an economic crisis that had resulted in an inadequate intervention in Afghanistan. It could no longer depend on its allies' obedience and thus was not ready for another conflict with unpredictable results. Given the vastness of the Polish movement plus the gravity of the crisis, the possibility of a major rebellion in the area could not be ruled out. Thus, in a roundabout way, the Islamic guerrillas of Afghanistan have combined with the Catholic Polish workers to paralyze the Soviet bear. Obviously, the commendable caution exercised by the Kremlin leaders is not eternal. A ruling class with its back to the wall can act in desperation if the pressure becomes unbearable. Yet, an invasion of Poland, if it does not lead to World War III, would certainly not lead to a stabilization but rather to the acceleration of the crisis of bureaucratic-collectivist regimes.

If the Soviets' conduct during the Afghan events has not run counter to the logic of coexistence, U.S. behavior has been definitely abnormal. The motives for the stiffening of the U.S. position can be two: strategic or tactical. Strategically, the serious crisis of the American economy in the 1970s, with the rise in unemployment and inflation and increased European and Japanese competition, rendered more useful the already growing trade with the Soviet Union.[25] While exports do not resolve capitalism's problem of overproduction, since exported goods are paid for with other goods that have to be sold on the internal market, this applies only in the long run given that in the short run, exported goods are exchanged not with other goods but with capital, if the importing country goes into debt or buys on credit.[26]

This is even more true if one considers the profitability for the West in these exchanges, which have led to the heavy indebtedness of Comecon countries ($77.1 billion in 1979).[27] This will no doubt continue since the structural conditions which engender it (weaknesses of Eastern technology and agriculture and Western interest in lucrative trade outlets) will not change. In fact, the crises of the two systems will increase trade because in the future the Soviet Union will need more grain and technology while the United States will have a greater need to sell them.[28] Thus,

25. On relations between the USSR and multinationals, see C. Levinson, *Vodka-Cola* (Paris, 1978).

26. In the case of East-West trade, it often happens that Western manufactured goods are traded for raw material which is set aside or admitted into the production cycle to fabricate manufactured goods, which only later, in changed economic conditions, are sold on the market. Thus, although this East-West trade does not resolve the long term tendency towards over-production, it does temporarily alleviate certain contradictions.

27. A. Tirapolsky, "Les Echanges Est-Ouest en 1979," in *Le Courrier des Pays de l'Est*, n. 243, p. 49.

28. It is argued that this East-West trade will increase very quickly because of the debt

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according to predictions made during the second half of 1980, despite the crisis of the Eastern economies, Western exports will grow by 3.5 percent as against the 6.5 percent for the previous year.[29] The U.S. embargo and the crisis of the Eastern economies only slowed this growth. In fact, in the future, the difficulties of the capitalist economies will make their competition for Eastern markets more ferocious.[30] Thus, the U.S. toughening is not a strategic shift aiming at a return to the pre-Camp David situation. This can be seen by the weakness of the American embargo — a stillborn initiative whose aims were more propagandistic than real. In fact, for an embargo to succeed it would have been necessary to obtain the consent of all European partners who are not exactly puppets (at least not Giscard and Schmidt) and the consent of the American multinationals dealing with grain and technology. According to Soviet trade statistics, Germany had 4.7 percent of Soviet trade, against 3.3. percent for Japan, 3.1 percent for Finland, 2.8 percent for Italy and 2.6 percent for both France and the United States.[31] By itself, U.S. trade is not essential. The same goes for the transfer of technology: in 1979 three main suppliers of technology to the Soviet Union (West Germany, Japan and France) sold respectively 684, 339 and 229 million dollars worth of technology (Italy sold $224 million, the U.S. $183 million, and Great Britain $43 million).[32]

The three main trading partners (and Italy to a certain extent) did not participate in the embargo,[33] so that it was a joke. This was revealed by Norris, a representative of the American computer business, even before the embargo, who held that any effort to block the export of computers to the Soviet Union was absurd for two reasons: (a) the Russians are unable to produce as many or as good computers as the West, so that it is good business to continue to sell to them and keep them in a state of dependence; (b) it is always possible to send U.S. computers to Russia via Sweden, Finland or Hong Kong.[34] Russians can design but not produce on a vast scale the latest-model

accumulated by the USSR and Comecon is not an insurmountable obstacle: Brazil, for example, with a small economy, has two-thirds of the debt of the East European countries. This optimism is excessive since it overlooks the fact that the Brazilian ruling class can alter this deficit in the balance of payments through a savage rate of inflation. Eastern planners cannot allow prices to jump around in this fashion as it would make economic predictions impossible. Also, relations between these regimes and the working class are tight in the sense that the workers (enjoying high employment levels and job security) are not going to submit to any additional austerity which would follow from a "Brazilian" deficit. Price increases in Poland during the seventies (nothing, by Brazilian standards) led to violent crises, while elsewhere shortages of consumer goods have produced deadly productivity strikes. In this context, to consider a Brazilian deficit and inflation rate is not realistic; the choices of the East European ruling classes cannot be Brazilian because those regimes are quite different. They can only maintain a certain low level of foreign indebtedness. In recent years this debt has increased $6-7 billion per year for the Comecon countries, and in Poland there is already a full-scale crisis. H. Serbat, "La Dynamique des Echanges Est-Ouest pour les Annes 80," in *Le Courrier des Pays de l'Est*, n. 232, p. 46; and W. Jampel, "L'Economie Polonaise en Crise," in *Le Courrier des Pays de l'Est,* n. 238, p. 3ff.

29. A. Tirapolsky, "Les Echanges Est-Ouest. . . ," *op.cit.,* p. 50.

30. D. Pineye, "Le Commerce Est-Ouest dans les Annees Quatre-vingt: Reflexions sure l'Avenir de la Demande des Pays de l'Est," in *Le Courrier des Pays de l'Est,* n. 243, p. 47.

31. See A. Tirapolsky, "Le Commerce Exteriere de l'URSS: Evolution Récente en 1978 et 1979," in *Le Courrier des Pays de l'Est*, n. 232, p. 23.

32. F. Geze and P. Gutman, "Les Liens Economiques Entre l'Est et l'Ouest, Sont-ils Ineversibles?" in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, n. 314, p. 7.

33. See A. Tirapolsky and P. Bastianelli, "La Crise Afghane et le Commerce Est-Ouest," in *Le Courrier des Pays de l'Est*, n. 241, p. 246.

34. F. Geze, "La Cooperation Est-Ouest dans l'Industrie Electronique," in *Le Courier des Pays de l'Est*, n. 230, p. 20. This declaration by Norris throws new light on the fact (also observed

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computers, and trilateral trade can make a mockery of any embargo.[35] At any rate, without the consent of European allies and American multinationals, the embargo could not succeed. This consensus was not generated and the Carter administration did not seriously pursue the matter. The same goes for grain.[36]

Thus, it is impossible to believe that the United States really wanted an anti-Russian embargo. Similarly, the anger generated by the Afghan invasion is absurd. In reality, the United States had suffered a long series of defeats in foreign policy: the renewed instability in Latin America (the fall of the loyal Somoza, Brazil's difficulties, etc.), the fall of the Persian bastion, the impasse in the Middle East after the hope of a rapid solution, the growth of Soviet influence in Africa, etc.[37] With the elections approaching, this was not too pleasant a scenario for the incumbent. Thus, the embargo farce can only be understood in terms of electoral motives. East-West economic relations have become an ineliminable necessity, even if they are not sufficient to eliminate the problems of both partners. It may pose problems of a new type, but it is destined to continue even if the crisis of the East European nations slows down the rhythm of trade growth. When the dust settles after the U.S. elections, the situation will return to where it was before, or, better, it will not, because nothing really changed in the first place.

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by Levinson) that the Soviets have great difficulty in obtaining the latest technology. This is not because of U.S. government controls (easily avoided by U.S. multinationals) but because the USSR and Comecon are in a weak bargaining position and must therefore pay 25-30% above world market prices for obsolete technological goods. On this point, see J. Wilczynski, *The Multinationals in East-West Relations* (London, 1976), pp. 163-64.

35. One-third of the contracts for technological cooperation of American multinationals are handled by their European affiliates. Cf. F. Geze and P. Gutman, *op.cit.*, p. 6.

36. Thus, in a "secret" meeting in Brussels in mid-1980 between Europeans and Americans, the following took place: "One who was there reported that the American representative was particularly embarrassed because he could not deny the fact that the U.S. had shipped 15.4 million tons of grain to the USSR, whereas President Carter had publicly stated that they would not sell more than eight million tons that year. Accused were the various multinationals from 'Dreyfus' to 'Continental Grain,' to 'Cargill,' to 'Bungie,' which, to avoid the embargo, shipped the grain first to Canada, Australia and Argentina for reshipment to the USSR." See A. Guatelli, "L'URSS Non Ha Mai Acquistato Tanto Grano come Quest' Anno Nonostante l'Embargo USA," in *Il Corriere della Sera,* June 4, 1980, p. 11.

37. These reverses are not the result of Soviet aggression. In Angola, the Cubans intervened after the South Africans and CIA mercenaries had done so. In the Middle East, the U.S. impasse was a result of Carter's inability to impose on Begin any solution of the Palestinian question. In Brazil, the workers and student movements are not the products of Moscow. Neither are the continuing U.S. economic crisis and the monetary policies of Giscard and Schmidt. Similarly, the Sandinista guerillas are a product of Nicaraguan social conditions and not of KGB machinations. See J. Chenaux, "Le Sandinisme Face aux Poids des Choses," in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, n. 310, p. 18ff.

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WHAT WE WANT TO DO AND WHAT WE CAN DO*

by Adam Michnik

So far, none of the analyses of the historical roots of the present events seems satisfactory. I think that it is necessary to go further back, to the year 1944, at a time when Poland, which until then found itself squeezed between Germans and Russians, saw imposed upon it a way of life still with us today. Let us review what happened in June of 1944. Mikolajczyk, the Prime Minister of the Polish Government in exile in London,[1] the uncontested leader of the peasant movement, went to Moscow to negotiate with Stalin a *modus vivendi* that would permit Poland to live on the borders of the USSR. Such a compromise would ostensibly permit Poland to survive as a nation within the context of an alliance with the Soviet Union. Symbolically, the day of the arrival of Mikolajczyk in Moscow was the day of the beginning of the trial of General Okulicki, the former director of the Army of the Interior,[2] as well as other officials of this institution. In this coincidence, which of course was hardly due to chance, we can clearly read the Polish drama of the next 36 years. It prefigured the manner in which the decisions at Yalta were to be made. All that has transpired since can be reduced to a discussion of the most efficient manner in which to implement the conception of the leading role of the Polish Soviet party. [*Laughter*]

Thus, the first question is: "What happened in Poland in 1944-45?" Was there a social revolution that gave state power to workers and peasants? Or, rather, was a style

*The following is the text of a speech given by Adam Michnik in Warsaw on November 14, 1980 at the Association for Scientific Studies, more familiarly known as the "flying university." Despite great difficulties, this unofficial and informal association has been in existence since 1976. Its creation followed the founding of KOR, which has since become KSS-KOR. If the term "flying university" is the one most commonly used, it is because this name recalls a similar initiative in Poland during the 19th century. The courses are given in various locations throughout Poland by specialists in the various fields — history, sociology, education, literature, economics. If this institution is "flying," it is for good reason. For example, Jacek Kuron, a KOR spokesman, gave a course in his home in 1979. His apartment was ransacked, and his family was terrorized. While Adam Michnik was giving courses in the provinces he was assaulted on the train many times by anonymous aggressors or welcomed by the police upon his arrival in town. This speech opened a tour through a number of provincial towns. It was presented in an emotional atmosphere: 2,000 people arrived in the hall well before the scheduled time, and 2,000 more listened to a broadcast of the speech outside the hall. Another speech by the economist Edward Lipinski was received with equal enthusiasm.

Adam Michnik is a 34 year old historian. He was one of the leading militants of the student opposition of the 1960s and, because of this, was condemned to three years of prison in 1968. He took a leading role in the creation of KOR in 1976, and he was one of the founders of the journal *Krytyka*. Having been arrested on numerous occasions, he was detained once again last August at the time of the last aborted attempts of the state to squash opposition. His book *L'Eglise et la Gauche. Dialogue Polonais* was published in France last year. The text published here was translated from a recording that was made by a correspondent of *L'Alternative*. It has not been reviewed by the author. Originally published in *L'Alternative*, n. 8 (Jan.-Feb., 1981), pp. 5-13. Translated by Douglas Collins.

1. Independent Polish government in exile, formed after the invasion in 1939. This government, incidentally, still exists.

2. The Army of the Interior (AK) was created after the defeat of the regular Polish forces in 1939. Formed in connection with the government in London, it was historically the first resistant group to combat the Nazis. It organized the insurrection in Warsaw in August-September 1944. Eventually, its members were persecuted during the Stalinist period (1945-53).

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of social relations imposed on us that we did not agree to, and which we have been trying to rid ourselves of ever since?

If we seek to understand the directors of the Polish Workers Party and the Union of Polish Patriots [3] (forgetting for the moment about any possible subjective motivations and what I would refer to as their "false consciousness"), I would hazard that these men were simply the representatives of Stalinist politics on Polish territory. It is at that moment that the communists had to undergo their test of patriotism — a test that is still going on.

The second essential question for understanding the Polish situation is "Why did the Poles submit to Stalinist pressure — to what my friend Leszek Kolakowski calls the process of Sovietization? [4] This term, in this context, has absolutely no pejorative meaning. It is simply a way of defining a social and economic regime that was imposed on our country, whose principle is that there must be no human relations outside of those defined by power, and that every man is the state's property. An answer to this question cannot be reduced to the problem of terror. The whole world knows that the terror began in 1945 against the soldiers of the Army of the Interior, other groups of the military resistance and the members of the other political parties, and concluded during the 1950s by striking everything in Poland with a minimum of independence. But terror alone does not explain everything. This perspective imposed on us is false. Because all of the ideological currents in Poland recognized the need for social reforms and for a critical look at the period between the wars. The answer given to these questions in 1944 was too simplistic. The social reforms instituted were but a caricature of those proposed. The communists who arrived at the end of the war succeeded in imposing false solutions because they succeeded in imposing their language. I would even say that the debate over language is the debate concerning the entire intellectual life of these past 36 years. This debate over language leads us to reflect on the technique that governs communications between men. During the course of those years, most of our society lost its language. The reality was terrible, and we could not find appropriate terms to describe it. This is why to this day we do not have a carefully thought out and objective book on Polish Stalinism. The abatement of terror and the understanding of this question of language permitted the Polish thaw of October 1956.

What concerns me here is not what brought about the Polish October of 1956, since that has been analyzed relatively well, but the reasons for our failures at that time, for this explains August 1980. To this question there is no simple answer. One can mention the need a society has to create its own myths — in this case, the myth of Gomulka: a man sanctified by time spent in Stalinist prisons, who presented himself as an enemy of collectivization, who opened the prison doors for political prisoners (including Cardinal Wyszynski), who rehabilitated the rebellious Poznan workers and who proclaimed that only a society of equals would guarantee a viable alliance with the Soviet Union. On all this, Gomulka was the spokesman for the immense majority of the Poles. That was the only time in the history of socialist Poland in which a communist leader was also the real leader of the whole nation. It must be said that

3. The Polish Worker's Party (PPR), the communist party of the interior, was created in December 1941 after the Soviet Union entered the war against Germany. The Union of Polish Patriots was an organization made up of communists who fled to the Soviet Union in 1941.

4. The historian and philosopher Leszek Kolakowski illustrated the revisionist tendency after 1956. He left Poland after 1968. During the 1960s he was the leader and intellectual inspiration for students like Michnik.

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Gomulka worked hard and passionately in order to lose his prestige...and his job. [*Laughter and applause*].

In analyzing the October crisis we must not neglect to mention our society's weakness. The reason for this is that all the power centers are within the party itself. The movement did not fail because it supported Gomulka, but because it identified with him, while also identifying its interests with those of a party apparatus. Also, when these men were defeated, they were defeated not as partisans of a democratic alternative or of democratic changes, but were expelled as individuals. This identification of the leaders of the social movement with the state permitted the state to impose its language on a democratic society. Thus, the debate was not conducted in terms of concrete realities but of ideology: Socialism, could it be better or worse? Ought Marxism to be open or closed? This type of debate prevented the left wing of the Polish October from formulating its true identity.

Another question is the following: why did Polish October not result in Soviet intervention? There is no simple answer. I will only mention one thing. To a great extent, we owe the lack of intervention to the attitude of the leaders of the state, of the party and of the military. Whatever you think of the Soviet leaders [*noise and laughter in the hall*], they are political realists. They understood that Polish society and the army would have resisted them. Thus they had two choices: either negotiate a compromise or impose by force their own model of socialism. We know that this was a matter for serious debate. If we recall that the heritage of the Polish October is constituted by two pillars of contemporary society — the Church and agriculture — it will be easy to understand that the Soviet leaders' approval was not obtained without considerable reluctance. When we ask ourselves if it is possible to influence Soviet leaders, if it is possible to have them accept the independent status of unions, we ought to look for an answer in the October experience. I think we should behave in such a way that it will appear to be in the interest of the Soviet leaders to accept Polish specificity, i.e., the moderation of our demands must be supported by the intransigence of our attitude.

In analyzing October 1956 one sees that we did not adequately uncover the mechanisms of Stalinist power, and publicize what was disclosed in the police activities, public trials, the subordination of justice, the collectivization of agriculture, the dictatorship of the party over society. We limited ourselves to a few words of regret, to a few generalities, and to the isolation of a few scapegoats. We blamed men when we should have blamed institutions.

The fourteen years of Gomulka's rule began with an unprecedented triumph of the party; they concluded with an equally unprecedented massacre on the coastal cities. They mark the end of some basic illusions: that the path to democratization is through the party; and so is the route to independence. Gomulka came to power as the spokesman of all those who believed he would lead to independence. We often speak of Gomulka's impossible character, of his autocratic behavior, of his inability to admit pluralism, to take his adversaries' arguments into account. However true this might be, he is above all the product of his milieu. What was his program, his achievement? His rule brought us to what one writer has called the "Mini-stabilization," and another the "Mini-apocalypse."[5]

His idea was to lead the whole society to believe that stabilization was the supreme

5. The *Mini-Apocalypse*, by Tadeusz Konwicki, is considered the best Polish novel of recent years. It was published by Nowa, a dissident publishing house. *The Mini-Stabilization* is the title of successful play by Tadeusz Rozewicz that was produced in Warsaw during the years of Gomulka's rule.

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goal. At that time a flaming Budapest showed us that if changes were possible, they were extremely limited by the Soviets' presence in Eastern Europe. The fundamental rules of the game were determined by the Soviets' presence on the one hand, and by the West's acceptance of that presence on the other. The call for help that was launched by the Hungarian Prime Minister Imre Nagy and the silence that greeted it were a revealing sign that the Yalta agreements remained in force, and that no one would help us if we did not help ourselves. Only we can help ourselves. We must ask ourselves what are the limits that must not be transgressed. This I cannot answer, but I would like to introduce a working hypothesis suggested by the experiences of Budapest in 1956, and those of Prague in 1968. These limits are determined by the following elements. First by the international situation, i.e., by the fact that Poland belongs to the Warsaw Pact: any attempt to modify this could lead to intervention. Secondly, by Polish political power. The only representatives and the only partners that the Soviet Union takes seriously are the communists. Today our movement must control and constrain this power to make concessions to democratic liberties. But we must not seek to eliminate this power. These remarks will not earn me much popularity, but it is my moral duty to express them nonetheless. The third element is the situation in Polish cities. If anarchy triumphs, if nobody can any longer control what is going on in the cities, this could provide the Soviet leaders with the justification they need for intervention. For this reason, we must never take to the streets in our efforts to gain the rights and power that belong to us. Here, again, I run the risk of offending some listeners. It is worth repeating, however, that disorder in the streets could lead to a general destablization not controllable by anyone. Experience has shown that even a small group in the streets can unleash unpredictable results.

Gomulka's era was not just that of the "mini-stabilization," but also provided us with an experience of national unity and pride. It was a time when a new generation took control of the state apparatus, a generation that had no links with the international Stalinist mentality of the leaders of the previous years — those leaders for whom the Soviet Union was the only model. This generation that entered the key positions during the sixties was condemned from the beginning to schizophrenia. On the one hand, it was afraid to exercise power without the endorsement of the Soviet Union, knowing full well that it could not remain in power without its support. On the other hand, because it was linked to Polish society through a myth of national unity, it sought the legitimation of that society. In short, it sought simultaneously two justifications, and hence felt threatened on both sides. Via this journalistic summary, we come to 1968.

We will not spend any time on that aspect that was most important for me: the student revolt and the defense of absolute values. Instead, we will address the issue of the sociology of power. What caused the leaders at that time to have recourse to slogans that they had not used before? We find ourselves again faced with an attempt to find justification by reference to social roots. In 1956 the elite sought to root itself in the Polish democratic tradition, but it failed. In 1968 the elite sought to ground its arguments in the "dark and troubled"[6] character of the Polish soul — in those depths vulnerable to anti-intellectual, xenophobic, egalitarian propaganda: to the exaltation of national unity through the creation of an object of collective hatred. The press in 1968 (especially in articles by the same journalists who today attack "anti-socialist forces") offers an excellent example of the deviation of national consciousness from its

6. Quoted from S. Brzozowski, a philosopher, writer, and journalist who died prematurely at the beginning of the century.

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proper concerns.

1968 was also the year of the bitter Czech experience — doubly bitter since the Polish army contributed to squashing the aspirations of a free nation. In the face of this lesson, how should Poland conduct itself? We can learn by analyzing what in the Czech situation led to the Soviet intervention. In seeking to identify themselves with society on democratic and nationalist grounds, the leaders freed themselves completely from the Soviet tutelage. Thus, the leadership found itself without Soviet support. The lesson that we can draw from this is that we are perhaps lucky to have comrade Kania as a leader rather than Dubceck or some other liberal. [*Laughter and applause.*]

But, morally, in the name of realism and geopolitics, can we remain silent while Poland's friends (such as Vaclav Havel and Jiri Lederer) are imprisoned in Czechoslovakia? On the other hand, can we forget the limits of the apparatus which, despite whatever one might say, is not sovereign, and does not speak with its own voice, but which we need, just as a sick man sometimes needs a plaster cast — indispensable to his survival — that makes every movement extremely unpleasant and difficult?

1970 was obviously the consequence of 1968. After 1968 the leadership lost touch with what was going on in the country. For the leaders Poland became a vast, dark territory, dimly lit here and there in the distance by the last flames of burning party committees. It was then that the working class erupted onto the scene of Polish history. This time they were real workers, not of the phony "workers" sent by the government to rough up the Warsaw students in 1968. In 1970 these workers were aware of political realities, and demonstrated this awareness by choosing as their model the strike committees, thus withdrawing once and for all from the leadership its legitimation as the workers' representative. In 1970 it was clear to everyone that it was not economic leadership that was being questioned, but rather power and its ways of communicating with society. The events on the coast revealed a profound social crisis, for when the workers were shot, Polish intellectuals remained silent for a long time. With the exception of Kuron and Modzelewski, none of the great artists, writers of "dissidents" dared to speak out.[7] We were not able to say a word. This was, of course, partly a consequence of 1968. Once again we allowed a language to be imposed on us. We were afraid that support by those of us who participated in the events of March 1968 and the student movement could only harm the workers' movement. But this is the last time that we fell for this kind of demagogy.

I have just been handed a question: "What do I mean when I say that the Polish allowed themselves to have a language imposed upon them after 1945?" I will give you an example. In the Catholic press or in the non-communist farmers' movement, one could find discussion of the relations of such and such an individual with the military power twenty years before, instead of discussions on collaboration with the current communist party in power. This was not simply a matter of censorship, but rather was a case of a submission to a language that was truly imposed. Another example is the attitude toward the German question. The role of Stalin in the annexation of territories, and in the victory over the Germans was only mentioned positively. To do so was to accept a language that was compromised. One was free to say many things of Stalin — whether it was true or false was irrelevant — as long as the rhetoric was

7. Jacek Kuron, a professor of education, and Karol Modzelewski, a medieval historian, wrote in 1965 an *Open Letter to the Unified Polish Worker's Party* that earned each of them three years in prison. Kuron was one of the founders and spokesmen of KOR. Today Modzelewski is one of the leaders of Solidarity.

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positive. To be sure, those who played this game (journalists, for example), understood full well that it was a game with rules. Their readers, however, were not always so informed. Due to the long habit of covering Stalin's real face with a mask, the mask seemed more real than the reality. In December 1970 this mask definitely dropped. In coming to power on the wave of the workers' revolt, Gierek understood that a leader could no longer do that in Poland.

Another question arises: can one really say that these events justified the Left stereotypes in Western Europe which held that state capitalism created conditions for the emergence of a new working class that will in turn abolish the system? Such stereotypes, the results of Trotskyites' and Eurocommunists' imaginations, are confirmed by reality. True, in industrial societies workers played a determining role. But this does not imply an ideological vision of socialist society. For me, the crucial fact is that power has lost its legitimation. As soon as workers made their own voices heard, and claimed the right to express their *liberum veto*, the leadership was forced to back down. I used the term *liberum veto* intentionally, because the workers' situation recalls that of the 17th century *szlachta*.[8] They had the power to block the Parliament's business and the politics of the king, but they had at their disposal no institution of their own to enable them to influence leadership in any enduring way.

Beginning in December 1970, Poland was governed by what the Czech sociologist Antonin Liehm calls a new social contract.[9] That is to say, both the leadership and society agree to give something up. While the leadership gave up its ambition to control all public life, society gave up any attempt, if not to abolish the leadership, at least to provoke it all the time. This was a tacit agreement, concluded between an organized power and a disorganized society. If it is broken by one of the two parties, it can be reestablished only at the cost of profound social dislocation.

The first years of Gierek's leadership were entirely devoted to the realization of two slogans that took the place of an ideology. "Work hard," he said to the people; "Get rich," he said to the leaders. At that time there were no longer debates about Marxism or communism, only discussion about productivity.

In 1976, the moment came when the working class made a massive use of its veto right. From that time on, one can speak of a total disintegration of power. It still exists, to be sure, but from then on it was unable to continue with its task of creating and modeling society. The state is tolerant — we thank Gierek for this [*laughter and applause*] — but this tolerance is not the result of a choice, but of weakness. It was also the beginning of a social organization independent of the state. Society was in the process of becoming its own master. This story is already well known: the creation of the first independent institutions, KOR, ROBCIO, the Association for Scientific Studies (the flying university), independent unions, publishing houses, free newspapers and magazines, the farmers' self-defense. Institutions that flirted with illegality now assumed a different status. Such was the case of the Catholic intellectuals' clubs and the Catholic press, which was now written and read in a new social context. From then on we lived in a different Poland. One can say the same

8. In feudal Poland the term *szlachta* referred to the representatives of the lesser nobles whose sole power consisted in their right to say no (*liberum veto*), and thus to suspend the assemblies of the regional Diet by a simple negative vote on a single question. The *liberum veto* has been considered the very expression of Polish freedom, as well as one of the causes of the anarchy that led to the division of Poland.

9. Cf. Antonin J. Liehm, "Intellectuals and the New Social Contract," in *Telos*, n. 23 (Spring, 1975), pp. 156-164.

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thing of organizations that were totally official, such as the Pen Club, and the Writers' Union, the Sociologists' Union, and the Union of Polish Economists. They evolved around a new problematic and discovered that a return to the past was impossible. This was the classical historical moment, according to Lenin's formula, when the leaders understand that they can no longer go on ruling in the same manner and the ruled understand that they will no longer tolerate the manner in which they have been ruled.

The question, then, is the following: to what extent have the diagnoses offered by the opposition been justified. As far as I am concerned, the diagnoses as well as the prognoses have been confirmed: the system of the government in power and its methods of economic leadership lead to a profound crisis that can only result in a social explosion. And if this explosion has taken the form that Bratkowski[10] has termed "a revolution of common sense," it is not to the powers that be that we owe this change. It was rather a revolution instigated by workers, and not, as I read a few days ago in an article by A. Werblan (a member of the Central Committee) in *Zycie Warszawy*, a revolution carried out by "the healthy forces of the party." [*Laughter and applause.*]

What is the meaning of the leading role of the Catholic Church? This role is not directly related to the election of Wojtyla as a Pole nor to his trip to Poland. I would put the matter differently. The role of the Church has been difficult and complex. It offers, both in the short and the long term, the most perfect model of the coexistence of an independent social institution with state power. This model connects two fundamental factors: a full understanding of existing realities and constant pressure on the state. Recently, of course, this attitude had run into some dangers, but this is not the point. What is crucial is the real function of this model: a model that we have not created, and whose lessons have yet to be learned. The Pope's visit revealed a new attitude on the part of the Poles. The question today is to understand what kind of *modus vivendi* the state seeks to establish with the Church. Will the Church attempt to construct a monolithic political institution around the state in order to direct it? In this eventuality, would we have what some Western observers fear — an Iranianized Poland with a powerless Shah, and a powerful Ayatollah who thinks only of overthrowing the regime? [*Various noises in the hall.*] I can see this tendency in our Church. I see others as well — notably, a tendency to seek an institutional role in the functioning of the state.[11] In this eventuality, the Church would have great freedom of religion, but at the cost of a change in the alliance between Church and state. The response that one finds in the Pope's sermons or in those of the priests close to Solidarity are very clear. They hope for an open Church in the context of a pluralist society — a Church which is not authoritarian, but insists on its rights as part of other human rights. But I insist once again that this is not the only position that the faithful are being encouraged to accept.

August 1980 marks the date of the creation of a new social contract that up to then had been lived rather than written down. What up to that point had been rather diffuse suddenly became organized. That was our great change. What was involved was not only a compromise between a sovereign society and its de-legitimized

10. One of the founders of the "Experience and the Future" group that numbers in its ranks Catholics and individuals critical of the party. He was elected president of the journalist's union in November.

11. The Catholic movement "Pax" has accepted a role within the government and it is represented in Parliament.

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authorities, but an agreement that society had to make with itself. State power was taken to be the single target for all complaints. As long as everybody was demanding raises, our solidarity was seamless. But this type of unity cannot last long. The kind of social contract in which everyone is demanding the most is and is not at the same time a form of solidarity. I do not want to leave you with the impression that I am indifferent to the masses' legitimate requirements! As long as the authorities put off presenting us with a total and realistic program of economic reforms to get us out of our present economic difficulties, to call for an end to workers' demands is nothing more than cheap demagogy. When one has a limited budget there are choices to be made. But to which will priority be assigned? To health care, to education, or to housing? Will we meet the farmers' demands and increase the price of meat, or will we accept the demands of city folks and lower the price of meat? Such matters are not easily settled. That is why the social contract requires an agreement of society with itself, independently of any agreement between society and state power.

What will be the attitude of power? This is the crucial question that we ask ourselves daily. What we all know is its total incompetence. Even the best leaders, those who understand that it is impossible to govern in the old manner, are incapable of conceiving of an alternative way to rule. For them the proof that power is very liberal is that right now there are only two political prisoners in our jails: Leszek Moczulski and Wojciech Ziembinski.[12] They do not understand that this is a symbolic slap that is just as bad and can be equally consequential as the matter of Solidarity's registration. Quite simply, since August 31, 1980 the strength of the principle of solidarity in our country is such that it is no longer possible to imprison people for their political beliefs. It is no accident that one of the points of the Gdansk agreement was the demand for freeing political prisoners. Let me take advantage of this moment here to express my disappointment that the authorities do not understand that those two political prisoners who remain in jail are twice as dangerous for them in prison as they would be outside. [*Applause.*]

The conflict surrounding the registration of the unions was also fundamentally a conflict over language. Once again, the authorities sought to emasculate the Gdansk Agreement. The state seeks to impose elastic and interchangeable concepts that can serve an infinite variety of purposes. In this spirit, it demanded that the idea of the leading role of the party be inscribed everywhere. But what is the precise meaning of this phrase? What is the significance of the fact that I must approve of the leading role of the party in the state? For me this has no other meaning than that which I have attempted to describe here — that, taking into consideration our geopolitical position and our place in Europe, our country must be governed by the communist party. How can one tell if I am for or against socialism? To describe me, as Mr. Tejchma has in his article, as an enemy of socialism makes no sense as long as it has not explained what it means to respect the leading role of the party. As far as I know, nobody has so far defined what this entails. A party journalist in today's *Zycie Warszawy* writes that the leading role of the party consists of *inspiring*. To this I agree enthusiastically. I would hope for nothing better than for the party to inspire me! [*Laughter and applause.*] But I do not mean by this that I challenge power's right to exist. No, I think that we must learn to co-exist with leadership. And we must teach it to co-exist with us, on other

12. Leszek Moczulski is a leader of the nationalist movement "Confederation for an Independent Poland." He was arrested August 21, 1980. Wojciech Ziembinski is president of the National Committee (The Movement for the Defense of the Rights of Man), also a nationalistic movement.

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grounds, however, than those that have existed for the past thirty-five years. [*Applause.*] Up to now the leaders have justified themselves with incantatory formulas, such as the phrase "anti-socialist forces" — formulas which refer to no one but those who make them uncomfortable. What does it mean to use such a formula when we see written at the same time that the head of the Polish Church is a great patriot, an admirable character. . ., etc.? Is this to say that the Primate has ever declared himself in favor of a socialism, whatever form it might assume? It is just ridiculous!

My last question is: will the Polish people, situated between Germany and the Soviet Union, and unable to request aid from anyone, ever succeed in achieving a democratic form of existence? Will they have, not only the virtue of courage, but also those of patience and moderation? Will they be able to master the techniques of prolonged resistance to the pressures and manipulations of a power that remains and perhaps will remain permantly in place? This is neither the perspective of Czechoslovakia of 1968, in which case it was the party apparatus that was the motor of change, nor that of Hungary of 1956 where almost all political structures were destroyed. If I had to discover a compromise for the Polish situation, if I had to find an example, a model, I would look for it in Spain where there was a common effort on the part of both the leadership and the opposition to move the country in the direction of democratic government, and away from an odious and repressive dictatorship. Of course, I understand that there are differences. . .the relative geopolitical positions of the two countries, for example. [*Laughter.*] But it is nevertheless an example worth thinking about.

What has happened is so extraordinary that it must be preserved, even at the cost of serious compromise. When I say compromise, I mean compromise, and not capitulation. Because, if the Gdansk Agreement constituted a compromise, it implies that we have witnessed the creation of institutionalized forms of dialogue between the rulers and the ruled. It is precisely this principle of compromise that inspires our demands that the mechanisms that led to the repression of students in 1968, those of 1970, and of 1976 be made public. It is this principle that will found the demand that those who are responsible for this repression cease to be considered immune, whether they be members of the police or the Ministry of Propaganda. Brzozowski says somewhere: "Let us learn to speak of what we have dared to do." I think this will be the meaning of the discussion from now on.

To conclude, I would like to say that in order to speak of what we have done, we must use the language of truth. Language is a domain in which it is impossible to compromise — even though we have found it necessary to compromise in politics. If we accept to compromise in language we will lose our credibility. It is for this reason that we must constantly repeat that a compromise is a compromise and not History, that a capitulation is a capitulation and not an agreement, that the fear of foreign intervention is not fraternal love for another nation. I will finish with an extract from the writings of my favorite author, George Orwell. These are strong words, written in anger. An Englishman of the Left, Orwell was addressing himself to his country's intellectuals when a rebellious Warsaw was in flames, abandoned by its allies from the East and the West, abandoned by public opinion of England: "Insincerity and cowardice are always paid for. Do not imagine that it is possible to remain for years the obsequious propagandists for the Soviets or any other regime and afterwards to regain one's intellectual honesty. A whore will always be a whore."

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QUESTIONS

Q: *Why has the position of KOR with respect to the Church become increasingly critical? Why has Cardinal Wyszynski been criticized?*

A: First of all, I am not up to date on KOR's criticisms of the Church. If you are referring to the article in *Trybuna Ludu* [*laughter*], let's be as clear as possible. It contains nothing but lies. I know that you have difficulty believing it. I, too, had trouble believing it when I read that KOR was founded in Geneva in 1975. As far as KOR's attitude is concerned, there were never any such documents. And even if the Catholics of KOR had such desires, the lay wing of KOR would have stopped their realization. We continue to support the attitude of the Primate of Poland. Personally, I feel it is correct for the Cardinal to want to work with state leaders. If I have correctly understood, the author of the question feels this collaboration to be a negative thing, having in mind the example of the Pax movement, or that of the Orthodox Church in the Soviet Union. There is no such collaboration in Poland. The Cardinal has always been most prudent and responsible in his conduct, all the while taking into account the danger of foreign intervention. In this matter I am in complete agreement with him. An entirely different problem is the opinion that one might have of the sermon he gave during the strikes in August — a sermon which, as you know, was cut on television. No one in KOR has openly taken a position on this problem. But I have no intention of avoiding the question, and will hence tell you what I feel about the sermon. I did not like it at all. I think that it was an error, that the Primate was wrong, and that the sermon was not understood by most people. And I think that it would be impossible to reduce the ideological position of the Cardinal and the Church to this single, unfortunate sermon.

Q: *When you say that 1968 was a key date in Polish history, are you relating the events that occurred at the time in Western Europe?*

A: First, why was March 1968 so important for Poland? I think that it was then that the umbilical cord linking intellectuals and many young people to the party was cut. For many people that was a turning point. Do not forget that it was the first time since 1957 that the government unleashed the special units of the militia.

Secondly, in what way did the situation in Poland in 1968 resemble that in the West at that time? The events cannot be compared. The crisis in Western society resulting in the revolts of French, German, and Italian students was an event of the greatest significance. The hopes for revolution that these students shared were, obviously, not realized. On the other hand, there were reforms made within the universities. There was even a time when a great number of the Western universities simply ceased to function. The universities were reformed to the extent that the professors who sought to control what their students learned were criticized for being reactionary. . . . But I must admit that my knowledge of these matters comes from books. I was not in the West at the time.

Q: *I do not agree with you when you say that stability is not important. What kind of economic life is possible in a country that is unstable?*

A: What I mean to say is that a stability founded upon an agreement with the will of the party has nothing to do with a democratic equilibrium which is the result of a continuously renewed compromise between the various elements of society. If one says today that we must at all costs obtain stability, this to me is meaningless. The problem is to understand what is concretely offered to the people, and at what price. If they say to workers: "Don't strike because we need stability," then I am on the side of the workers who reply: "No, that's not true. What we really need is bread, freedom, and

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justice." [*Applause.*]

Q: What do you mean by government-instigated reforms that are caricatures of reforms?

A: If you nationalize a printing press on the pretext that this constitutes the socialization of the means of production, at the same time you are destroying the freedom of the press. If they impose forced collectivization in the name of agrarian reform, this is but the caricature of reform. It is also a caricature of reform if, in the name of access to education, authorities provide schooling that has nothing to do with Poland's national culture.

Q: Would it be too much to hope for the development of a split within the party that would result in a polarization of those who are honest and those who are not, of those who are Russia's lackeys and those who are not? Do you think it is possible to imagine a different Polish Communist party that would be independent of the Communist party of the Soviet Union?

A: You are asking me to be a prophet. My personal opinion is that there will be no such polarization, but that there will be a purge that will eliminate the crooks. I differ from many in that I do not attribute a great deal of importance to problems of theft and abuse. I do not think that there will be calm and serious discussion of these matters until it is possible to question those who are responsible for the investigations of the corrupt. The president of the body that is doing the investigating, General Moczar, declares that he is aware of all cases of abuse. I am very pleased that this is the case, but it seems to me that it ought to be his mission, not simply to collect instances of corruption, but also to put an end to them. [*Laughter and applause.*]

Q: What do you think of Leszek Moczulski's manifesto Revolution without Revolution?

A: I will not reply to that question as long as Moczulski remains in prison. [*Applause.*]

Q: What do you think of the Mijal group that has been installed in Albania?

A: I guess that we are now getting into the comedy portion of this evening's show.

Q: Are there movements that are similar to ours in the Soviet Union?

A: No. I have heard of strikes in Estonia, but these strikes were much smaller in scale than ours.

Q: Do you think that it is possible today to construct a progressive ideology capable of generating the support of the majority of people?

A: One does not invent an ideology. It is the product of events. This is how KOR's ideology came into existence, and how Solidarity's ideology is now developing. Only afterwards will our philosophers and intellectuals describe this ideology that is the one of today's Polish society.

Q: Lech Walesa has said that Solidarity is an apolitical movement. I feel that this is an illusion. I think that in today's Poland everything is political.

A: I agree with you, but the notion of what is political is not clear, and anyone can have his own ideas about it. I also feel that the purely apolitical phenomenon is not something that can be imagined. The question of the use of the national budget, for example, is a political question. But it must be said that Walesa is correct in the sense that Solidarity does not seek to have political power within the state.

Q: Do you think that it would be possible for the state to have its agents participate in Solidarity in order to generate artificial divisions within its ranks?

A: Do you know of a single institution in this country that has not been infiltrated?

Q: What is KOR's program for the immediate future, taking into consideration the

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appearance of Solidarity?

A: Neither I, nor anyone else in KOR has a program for the future. We are in the process of debating that question right now. There are differing views on this issue, but one thing is certain: the moment of the centrality of KOR has passed, and will not return.

Q: You have compared the power of the state with a plaster cast that is at the same time uncomfortable but indispensable. Can you explain yourself further?

A: With what are you not in agreement? Is it with the fact that it is uncomfortable or with the fact that it is indispensable? I say that it is uncomfortable because, had it been possible, I would have preferred to have chosen it freely through democratic elections. I have no enthusiasm for the doctrine of the leading role of the party. I am saying that it is indispensable because I think that in the present international situation the Soviet Union would not tolerate the radical solution of the explusion of the communists from power. By cutting the branch upon which power sits, we would be cutting the branch upon which we are sitting ourselves — we are dealing here with a dialectic that is rather unpleasant. [*Laughter.*]

Q: What importance do you attribute to the attacks on KOR that have been heard on the radio, or seen in the press and on television? Do you expect to see more arrests?

A: It would be very dangerous for them. But I have no rational grounds that would permit me to confidently state that they would not behave in such a stupid manner. [*Applause.*] As far as the attacks in the media are concerned, they constitute a desperate gesture by state power. It pains me to see these journalists who find themselves in a position analogous to that of a gentleman who ducks behind a car in order to satisfy a pressing physical need. When the car unexpectedly leaves its parking space, the embarrassment of the gentleman is apparent to all. [*Laughter and applause.*]

Q: You have written somewhere: "I believe in the future of democratic socialism, etc." Could you expand on this a bit?

A: We are entering into a new subject. I am hesitant to speak about this matter today, at a moment when journalists are labeling me "an anti-socialist force"; it is not the proper time for me to cry out that I am a friend of democratic socialism! The values that I embrace are those of the tradition of the Polish Socialist Party and can be found in the texts of Abramowski, Prochnik and Ossowski.

Q: Do you think that we will see a true parliamentary democracy in the near future, or are we eternally condemned to a democracy that calls itself socialist?

A: I urge you not to be too impatient. In the long run, of course, I believe that it is possible. History teaches us that all tyrannies come to an end.

AUTOGESTIONS

Special Issue

POLOGNE: LA BRECHE?

•Articles by J. Kuron, K. Modzelewski, W. Kuczynski, etc. •Previously unpublished documents. •Discussion with K. Pomian, D. Singer, and A. Smolar.

1981 Subscriptions: French individual, 100 F., and institutional, 120 f.; Foreign individual, 110 F., and institutional, 140 F. Price of individuals copies: 30 F. Send check to Editions PRIVAT, 14 rue des Arts, 31,000 Toulouse, France.

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MIRACLE IN POLAND*

by Krzysztof Pomian

The strange Polish summer of 1980: for six weeks, before spreading along the Baltic shores, the strike flickered off and on in one city after another, following a capricious itinerary, here among the metal workers, there among the street cleaners, elsewhere hitting 200 factories at once, without producing the least incident. Even in Gdansk, where, reaching its culmination, it took an explicitly political turn to a degree unprecedented in Poland, and where the inter-factory strike committee (MKS) for 18 days practically administered an urban area of about 75,000 people, there not only were no incidents, but, even more incredibly, the edict banning the sale of alcohol passed by the provisional authorities was unanimously respected. Have the bread-eaters become angels, as Slowacki prophesied? Unlikely. But do the laws of probability still make sense in — to put it briefly — a semi-totalitarian country, swept by an erratic strike that threatens any moment to become general, where workers nonetheless do not try to take to the streets, where they succeed in achieving their goals with the sole weapon of work stoppages and sit-down strikes, and where, on the other hand, the government, contrary to its inveterate habit, adopts a conciliatory attitude and refrains from ordering the police and the army to attack strikers? This is reason enough to abandon ratiocination and cry "miracle!" Yet this would be still just a minor miracle.

For the true miracle, in the full sense of something that not only surpasses all hopes but also an event contrary to nature, actually contrary to the nature of a Soviet-type regime — was, according to all evidence, the signing of the accords between the MKS and the government representatives in the great conference hall of the Gdansk naval shipyards on Sunday, August 31, 1980, at 4:40 p.m. At least, judging from the responses from the eyewitnesses, it must have been a miracle. On the television news that very evening were speeches for the occasion, exchanges of signatures and copies of the agreement, smiles, applause, flashing bulbs, the whole paraphernalia generally deployed at the signing of a peace treaty between two governments, and finally the ovation by the strikers, their wives and children for the president of MKS, Lech Walesa. I can very well understand this feeling of having witnessed a miracle. But the event was indeed taking place in all its splendor, and confirmed the next day by articles of special correspondents and editorial commentaries. Although a week earlier I had said that a compromise was possible, I now found it impossible to integrate it with what I know of my country and its institutions. The surprise was even greater among foreign observers for they expected the Soviet army to intervene and to end the Polish summer with the funeral march previously heard in Budapest and Prague, which would have rid them of the embarrassment one feels when it is necessary to gather facts contrary to all pre-established patterns.

Totalitarianisms in Time

That the regimes which emerged from the Bolshevik revolution, the original version and its supposed copies, are a human and not a diabolical invention, and that even if

*Originally published in *Débat*, February 1981. Translated by David J. Parent.

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its origins were diabolical it still would not have been exempt from the vicissitudes of all regimes known in history, is what even specialists in Soviet affairs recognize — but with reticence and, often, qualifications that deprive the two theses of the least meaning. This is not surprising: these truths are undeniable but not at all convincing, since what we know ought to be does not match the terribly equivocal facts we observe. Thus, no one denies that many aspects of the Soviet state were modified from Stalin to Brezhnev. But everyone, or nearly everyone, admits that Stalin, if he returned to Earth, would not feel very obsolete on seeing what his successors have done. These two judgments are compatible only if the changes following his death are regarded as having affected the surface and not the depths, the accidental features rather than the very essence of the regime. To this widespread opinion, one can only object that for millions of Soviet citizens, the end of mass terror modified essential conditions of their daily life and that, for them, the regime changed in nature, since they can go to sleep now without fear of being awakened at dawn by the suppliers of the Gulag. But it is also true that nothing in the organization of Soviet power forbids its operators from resorting to mass terror, if all else fails, just as nothing prevents the re-emergence of a tyrant. According to some, these changes are just the product of a combination of factors that prevent the system's basic tendencies from being expressed, and their end is near. According to others, they are symptomatic of the civilizing of Soviet power itself, of the weakening of oppression compared with the past — and thus a highly equivocal fact. Which means that on the question of the whole range of changes achieved in the Soviet Union in the last 25 years, of their direction, nature, consequences, almost all conceivable interpretations can be defended, from the one that discovers in it a slow but sure evolution toward more legality and democracy, to the one that claims that during this period nothing really irreversible has taken place and that Stalinism still persists — although in a subdued form.

European countries under Soviet rule each represent a different case. It seems justified, however, though greatly simplified, to group Bulgaria, the GDR and Romania. There the Stalinist model has been modified on the pattern of the Soviet Union, though sometimes with delay and reluctance, while local variations seem, from our viewpoint, to be merely secondary. The interpretation of the history of these countries during the last quarter of a century thus encounters problems analogous to those posed by Soviet history. But totally different problems arise when one turns to Czechoslovakia. Why the attempt to really democratize the executive system of power from the top was, if not supported, at least not accompanied from the beginning by a workers' movement, mobilized only after the entry of Warsaw Pact troops on August 21, 1968? How was it that, starting with this date, it was possible to restore the Soviet model quite rapidly, approximately to its original purity without provoking mass reactions — especially among workers? I am not competent to answer such questions, but the comparison of Czechoslovakia today and Hungary in 1968 suggests that Soviet pressure alone does not suffice to explain the state of Czechoslovakia, for Hungary too was and remains subject. Along with other factors, it is mainly the workers' passivity that must be cited if one wants to understand the reasons for the very long and harsh Prague winter. More generally, Hungary's destiny since 1956 seems to show that a national uprising, even vanquished and repressed, can leave lasting marks by stimulating the evolution of the regime toward a better management of the economy and a more decent standard of living, and also toward more liberty and dignity. Of course, the price paid in Hungary in casualties, people deported and imprisoned was atrocious. But at least it was not completely in vain. In this sense, Miklos Molnar was

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quite right to speak of the "victory of a defeat."

Although in 1955-1957 Poland underwent a period of intense changes affecting areas as diverse as agriculture, church-state relations, social relations in the factories, higher education, the youth movement, censorship, and although it provoked obvious Soviet displeasure, it did not have to suffer the effects of Soviet armed intervention. It is alone in this privileged position. Of course, its demographic potential is higher than that of the other states of Central and Eastern Europe. A country of insurrections and, very recently, of strikes and labor revolts more frequent than elsewhere, Poland inspires a certain respect. Poznan, June 1956; 50 dead, 300 wounded, 323 arrested; Gdansk, Gdynia, Szczecin and Elblag, December 1970: 46 dead, 1,165 wounded, the number of jailed remains unknown; Ursus, Radom and Plock, June 1976: two killed, several dozen wounded, 861 indicted, 703 convicted. The violence of the clashes between the forces of order and Polish workers is brought out brutally even in this official list of victims, which may fall short of the truth and to which would have to be added all the victims of reprisals following the sporadic strikes, very numerous in the 1960s, and all those laid off without warning after June 1976, when from one day to the next, some thousands of people were deprived of their means of existence. All of this, we shall see, remained inscribed in the collective memory of Polish workers, who also remembered many dozens of students arrested and sentenced after the demonstrations and strikes of March 1968, as well as all the students and intellectuals whose studies and careers were brutally cut short because they sided with the strikers.

The workers' uprisings punctuating Polish history in the last 25 years contributed to multiplying the differences between the Polish variant and the original version of the Soviet regime. Before dealing with this, let us dwell for a moment on the problem of terminology. A regime of the Soviet type? A Communist regime? "Real socialism?" What can one call this social formation which, in Europe and Asia, extends from east of the Elbe, covers China, and descends southward toward Vietnam and produces meta-states in Africa and Latin America? If I prefer to use the name Soviet regime in the case of the Soviet Union and Soviet-type regime in dealing with other versions of this model, it is because, contrary to expressions such as Communist regime or real socialism, it places the accent not just on proclaimed ideological beliefs but on the system of institutions, on the organization of power. For that is what is really important. Proclaimed ideological beliefs, of course, play a significant role: by their apparent invariance they assure a link with origins, inspiring spectacles draped in revolutionary trappings to disguise chauvinism as love of humanity and imperialist expansion as disinterested aid. Without such ideological trappings the international Communist movement, always pro-Soviet though with reserve forces, would cease to exist. On the other hand, the repetition from year to year of the same stereotyped speeches, identical down to the smallest details from Pankow to Kamtchatka, if not to Hanoi, creates the impression of an immutability, a uniformity and a homogeneity of each country taken individually and of the whole conglomeration, an all the stronger impression since precise information on the functioning of these institutions and the state of these societies is lacking. Propaganda and censorship: the first by incessantly repeating the same themes, the same quotations, the same phrases, and the second, by trying to block all data showing that something unforeseen is happening, thus trying to fabricate the image of a harmonious system in which the extremely rare conflicts are the work of remote-controlled plots and which does not vary significantly in time or space. Anyway, this image has long since ceased to be credible. And yet it is what we presuppose, most often quite unconsciously, when we declare an event to be contrary

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to the nature or essence of the Communist regime, whose exemplary realization would be the Soviet Union, which model it would have been impossible to deviate from without inevitably triggering a military intervention.

Poland's Specific Situation

But Poland did deviate from it 25 years ago. It is the only Soviet-type country where the equivalents of the collective farms (*kholkhozi*) were dismantled by the peasants in 1956 and where the bulk of agricultural production is to this day produced by private farms. When one knows the ideological importance attached to rural collectivization, accomplished both in Czechoslovakia and in Hungary after its failure in Poland, one understands that this is not a matter of a minor infraction of the "scientific laws of the building of socialism." It is simply a matter of the monopoly of agricultural and industrial production which the Polish state failed to achieve. Similarly, it failed to achieve a monopoly of belief despite years of struggle with the Catholic church. Since the release, in October 1956, of Cardinal Wyszynski, the church's influence has been spreading constantly and its authority growing, even though during all these years the government did not spare any means in limiting its influence: blocking access to the radio (since 1949) and television, limiting the circulation of the Catholic press and the paper quotas allocated to Catholic publishers, multiplying administrative obstacles to the construction of new churches — not to mention treating all the faithful as second-class citizens, contrary to the law. But in relation both to religion and to agriculture, resistance was too massive and too determined to be suffocated, so that the government, without ever interrupting the war of harassment it was waging against both the peasantry and the church, was finally forced to compromise with both of them.

Besides these two great breaches opened in the system by the popular uprising of 1956 and which the government failed to block, there were many others of lesser importance that did not turn out to be as durable. Thus, the attempts to set up workers' self-management had but an ephemeral life; it is clear today that it could not be otherwise, since self-management organs in the factories from the very beginning had been reduced to a subordinate role because of the maintenance of rigid centralized planning of industrial activities. The very fact of having laid claim to self-management, unanimously considered by the left at the time to be the symptom of a "high level of class consciousness," shows rather that the Polish workers of 1955-57, strongly saturated with official ideology, still believed *en masse* that they were indeed the collective owners of the means of production and had political power to express their interests. The "revisionist" intellectuals contributed valiantly to cultivating these illusions whose persistence explains the non-appearance of the theme of independent unions and timidity in the matter of the right to strike; just as they were satisfied with patching up the official unions, they let themselves be convinced that in a "socialist regime" the strike is an absurd act, suicidal in the extreme: "You don't strike against yourself!" Once that is said, the very existence of the workers' self-management organs, which lasted several years, removed Poland from the Soviet model on this essential point. Poland also deviated from that model in culture, where a relatively open policy was pursued until about 1968; and in higher education, the universities had until that date retained some limited but real autonomy. Moveover, the indoctrination of youth was made much more difficult than in the past by the abolition, in December 1956, of the sole, almost obligatory organization whose task it was, and which for that very reason fell into the most total discredit. Long years were necessary to regain control of

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this sphere, crucial as it is for a Soviet-type regime.

One of the precarious conquests of October 1956 was the return, against Soviet wishes, of Wladyslaw Gomulka, dismissed in 1948, as first secretary in the wake of the Poznan revolt. For a long time we have tended to see this return in a rather somber light because the man perpetrated one deception after another, even before finishing his career with the guilt of machine-gunning workers in December 1970. Yet, in 1956 his election, greeted as a national victory, almost set marching the Soviet army, which had just at that moment suffered a loss in the person of one of its marshalls who was obliged to return home after having been parachuted into Poland a few years earlier to head that country's Ministry of Defense. In retrospect, we can but admire Krushchev and his comrades' wisdom. Despite such affronts, they managed to trust Gomulka: unlike the Poles, neither he nor his successors ever had cause for regret. But on October 1956, like today, no one knew what the future would hold. In approving Gomulka, the Soviet leadership was also giving its endorsement to the very specific nature of Poland, to this particularly remarkable epoch, by giving him the responsibility to pacify it as much as possible. He set out to do so with some success, but was swept out of office before he could complete the task.

His successor, Edward Gierek, was also elected in the wake of a workers' revolt. He took command of a country that was in many ways very unorthodox. After labor unrest had shaken the cities of the Baltic coast and almost turned into a general strike, to obtain peace he had to let Poland deviate even more from the straight Soviet road by conceding to workers a veto right on decisions affecting their living standards. He did it, but reluctantly: having succeeded initially in convincing the workers of Szczecin of the impossibility of reversing an unmitigated inflation, the last present from Gomulka's team, he was forced to do so by a strike of women in the textile industry in Lodz. To avoid the repetition of such bitter experiences, the country's leaders decided in the future to consult workers, especially those in big industry, on economic and social measures. That was a pious resolution: that kind of consultation could provide no valuable result without democracy in the enterprises and in the state. But it was a resolution signifying a new kind of relation between the government and the working class, in which the government is afraid of the workers, and not vice versa. Among other innovations of this era, let us mention Poland's unprecedented and unequalled opening to Western countries, which became its main source of credit. Gierek, whose pro-Sovietism was greater than that of his predecessor, seemed to have wanted to install on the banks of the Vistula the 51st state of the United States, which was at the same time the 17th Republic of the U.S.S.R. On top of all of this, after a new defeat inflicted on the government by the workers in 1976, a dissident opposition appeared which, despite persecutions, vexations and harassments, has broadened its influence during the last five years, since the government never dared use against its militants the standard means of other Soviet-type countries: house arrests, internment in psychiatric hospitals, long prison sentences, etc.

State and Society: An Original Kind of Coexistence

If the significance, nature, direction, and consequences of the changes that have occurred in the Soviet Union in the last 25 years legitimately lend themselves to controversy, it is not the same for Poland and Hungary. For, first of all, there is no doubt that these two countries have evolved and that, on the whole, this evolution has removed them from the Soviet model, which is still in force in its country of origin. In Hungary, we seem to be dealing with a kind of slow and unspectacular drift, begun in

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1963 when, having abandoned the repressive policy pursued after crushing the revolution in 1956, the government drew the political lessons from it and began to set the foundations for a new social compromise. In Poland the evolution which began toward 1955 is much more sporadic, interrupted by periods of stagnation or even regression. An example of this is the years 1968-70, which saw a "normalization" of the intellectual milieu and of the students combined with a badly disguised anti-semitic campaign, and in the course of which the government succeeded in erasing many of the gains of October 1956. Nonetheless, if the beginning of 1980 is taken as *terminus ad quem*, it is discovered that the two countries, each in its own way, have since 1956 followed converging political trajectories and that, without having become democratic, they are no longer purely and simply totalitarian.

Yet, all the institutions characteristic of Soviet-type totalitarianism are still operating, which shows well the limits which the evolution of Hungary and Poland, real as it may be, has not been able to cross. The Communist Party is still organized according to the principles of "democratic centralism": the leadership, dominated by the first secretary who, barring an accident, is answerable only to Moscow, chooses the members of the apparatus, polyvalent professionals in the exercise of power, and, by their intermediation, the simple members of the party: the nutritive medium of the apparatus and its protective belt. Again, it is the party, and the lower echelon authorities whom it trains for this, that assigns the occupants of all positions, however unimportant they may be, even if they are theoretically electable. Thus the party apparatus always keeps this power monopoly, reserving for itself all political, economic, social and cultural decisions, unless it delegates them to liege men, having them ratified afterward by the party's grass roots organizations, i.e., on the national level by the Parliament and at the regional or local level by the counselors theoretically selected by elections. It gives orders to the security forces, the army and the police. It supervises the entire administration of the state and management of the economy, the government as well as its planning commission and other offices being just executive agencies. It controls, by means of its censorship powers, all media, publications, performances and educational activities from nursery schools to the Academy of Science. Every association is subject to its authority. It has the majority in every assembly. It insists on being present in every field except religious institutions. A sort of collective owner of the country, the apparatus at the same time arrogates to itself, under cover of the party, the monopoly of the representation of society as a whole as well as of all categories that comprise it and of all conflicting interests. Certainly, in a country like Poland, the apparatus is forced to tolerate the church, to which everything opposes it, since communist ideology and Catholic religion are irreconcilable. But, except for the period when the former hoped to destroy the latter in order to dominate without sharing power, it never officially recognized that there was a conflict between the two. It claims merely to want to divide tasks between itself and the church in such a way as to assure itself of the exclusive authority in the entire public domain, thus keeping a dominant position. It is precisely in its refusal to admit the pluralist and conflictual nature of society that makes this apparatus deeply totalitarian.

Both in Poland and in Hungary, a totalitarian government thus coexists with institutions which are not totalitarian, or not entirely so; a theoretical power monopoly, kept in reserve, so to speak, is mediated in an everyday policy which does not exclude the quest for compromise solutions and respect for certain limits that are not codified anywhere, never clearly defined, but whose outline seems to be known.

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This results in a situation that is difficult to describe without going into detail and nuances, for it is only for convenience of exposition that these two components have been presented one after the other. In living reality, they interreact or even interpenetrate, so that almost every phenomenon and every institution presents two faces, and every observation has two meanings that affect one another. And still that is not enough; for the description of such a system ought to have taken into account the oscillations that cause more or less "liberal" periods to alternate. But whether it becomes clearer or more somber, the image we finally arrive at always remains gray.

The Avalanche

During the first months of 1980, the gray of despair seemed to be in Poland the dominant color of experienced time. Dissident or oppositional groups, the line between the two being sometimes difficult to trace, were of course carrying on their activities. Created in September 1976, the Committee for Social Self-Defense of the KOR (KSS-KOR) in its communiques denounced abuses of power, violations of the law, persecutions. Although its courses were dispersed regularly by the police, the Society of Scientific Courses (the "Flying University"), entering its third year, organized colloquia and debates in private apartments. The independent editions "Nowa" lengthened their list of books and periodicals run off on mimeograph machines and distributed secretly; their organizer, arrested in March, was freed after a few months in prison. In Gdansk two committees to establish free unions had been functioning since 1978; among their militants, treated brutally by the police, were notably Mrs. Anna Walentynowicz and Lech Walesa. Let us add the "Peasants' Self-Defense Committees," various youth associations and organizations more explicitly political in nature. But all this taken together seemed to affect just restricted sectors of society, some tens of thousands of persons at the very most. An enormous number considering the conditions, no doubt never attained in a totalitarian country, unless it were like Poland just semi-totalitarian. A ridiculously small number, nonetheless, compared with the number of members of the Polish Communist Party, which at that time claimed more than three million members.

Gray was thus the dominant color. Economic difficulties were increasing, sufficiently to poison the life of common mortals, and with these difficulties, the irritation provoked by an inept and indecent propaganda which insisted on the country's successes and the welfare of the citizens. Even the apparatus was getting sick of it. In February 1980, at the 8th Party Congress, an assembly whose participants are closely screened, it was enough to open the sluices for a flood of critique to sweep away the officiating prime minister with a speed not foreseen on the agenda. He was replaced by a personality symbolic of the atmosphere of the times: gloomy and dull, voiceless and faceless, who to be consistent and to mark himself off from his predecessor, had, it seems, taken to drink. Compromised by his son's escapades, he conceived the idea of sanitizing the situation and promoting moral rigor. This was to his own detriment. The very fact of raising such a subject was perceived as a semi-admission and an attempt to reduce to a few black sheep the general corruption which gave the regime the appearance of a veritable kleptocracy. By furnishing innumerable anecdotes, reports, and stories, this sapped what little credibility and authority it had left. Incapable of dealing with the economic disorder and improving management whose errors, visible to all, were denounced by both the economists of the "Flying University" and those of the "Experience and Future" group (which criticized the government from positions close to the apparatus's technocratic and

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reformist wing), the prime minister opted for a solution well suited to his image: a price increase for selected meat items, while hiding the fact by causing certain prices to climb in some areas, without it being all too obvious. It was perhaps hoped that, in this way and at the beginning of the summer vacation, the price increase could pass unnoticed.

On the afternoon of July 1, ignited by rumors of the increase in meat prices, a strike was called in the three departments of machinists' shops in Ursus. Other groups demonstrated elsewhere and their propagation moved with such speed that the central government had to let the plant-managements and local authorities negotiate with the workers before they even returned to work. For an analogous situation one must go all the way back to Gierek's first months, when the apparatus was ready to make many concessions. But even at that time negotiations dealt only with salaries, prices and working conditions — never with political problems. They were discussed, it is true, during Gierek's visit to the naval shipyards at Szczecin on January 24, 1971. But that was not a negotiation. And once order was restored, the authorities again in each case set the resumption of work as a prerequisite for any dialogue. They also required that it be conducted by the strike-representatives in isolation from their constituents. The idea was to make them more malleable, and generally it worked.

Since the beginning of July 1980, this mechanism has broken down. The directors and cadres charged with coming to terms with the workers not only had to negotiate during the strike and under the control of all the workers but also to answer unedited allegations dictated to the strikers by experience. Sometimes, in addition to higher wages, they wanted a written pledge from the authorities that they would not use repressive measures against them after work was resumed. In many cases such a pledge was actually extracted by the threat of continuing the strike. Sometimes, also unprecedented, the strike committee refused to dissolve itself after the strike had ended, and it had been necessary in the overriding interest of peace to accept its continuance, asking only that its members change its name to avoid the very word "strike," which the official idiom pretended not to understand. Thus, there appeared such terms as "workers' commissions," "inter-factory committees," etc. Another milestone was crossed in Lublin where the strike paralyzed the whole city from July 15 to 18, so that the central government had to send to the scene a Vice-President, Jagielski, the same person who would later sign the Gdansk agreement, to avoid an open confrontation and to negotiate the conditions for a return to work.

The Government Disarmed?

Why did the government, theoretically all-powerful, not resort to force? Only the archives or the memoires of those who participated in the decision-making — if they ever write them — may some day make it possible to answer this question. Today, we can merely risk hypotheses. So one can suppose that if, as Gierek claimed, in December 1970 the Soviets favored a "political solution," in July 1980 they pushed in the same direction, if only to prevent the Olympic hymn at Moscow from being drowned out by the chatter of machine-guns in Poland — which would have been heard even where they pretended not to hear the echoes coming from Afghanistan. This hypothesis, even if confirmed, would not suffice to explain the behavior of party leaders: in 1970, Gomulka had not needed orders from Moscow to have the workers shot. But precisely his example, supposing the absence of Soviet pressure, was able to temper military passions, however strongly they were manifested. For no one in the apparatus, including the main interested party, could be unaware that Gierek would

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not politically survive an eventual slaughter and that he would drag down, with his fall, together with his closest collaborators, those who would have accepted to become shooters on this occasion. Nor could anyone ignore the fact that soon some scapegoats would have to bear the responsibility for the crisis and that, in such seismic periods, it is best to keep one's distance from the administration which was in the process of becoming the "old" one, in order to be able to leap quickly and safely to the band-wagon of a new patron. All this must have motivated the members of the apparatus to maneuver evasively, to dissimulate and to break ranks in their reaction, and especially to avoid getting wet ahead of time. In any case, apart from a few exceptions, this is what they did all summer long.

This reconstruction, hypothetical but probable, must also account for the confusion caused by the workers' power and surprising behavior; without even trying to demonstrate in the streets or in front of government buildings, they turned their back on the government with an unspeakable contempt and, enclosed in their own terrain, demanded that the government officials come and negotiate with them. It was truly a topsy-turvey world: instead of sending delegates with humble petititions to the great buildings full of high personages wielding intimidation and flattery, threats and promises, the workers forced the apparatchiks to go down into the factories. Faced with these citizens, disobeying massively and collectively, but without offering the least pretext for the usual accusations of being "hooligans," or even "counter-revolutionaries," what could a government do, even had it been more sure of itself than Gierek's team? To offend international opinion and especially that of its creditors, expressed in billions of dollars, to silence the Church and the opposition, and subsequently to resume a totalitarian policy, to give the order to attack the factories at the risk of assuming all the consequences? Five minutes of reflection ought to have sufficed for even the most obtuse mind in the apparatus to understand that this would have meant to unleash a civil war, the price of which he and his colleagues would, no matter what, have been the first to pay.

In renouncing the use of violence, the party leadership seemed, after the beginning of July, to have lost the initiative and its grip on society, as if these could not be exercised without violence. In appearance, nothing exceptional had yet happened: the leaders of the party continued to meet, the government still governed. Everything seemed still in order. But the voice of party leaders, though still controlling the media and censorship, could no longer make itself heard. In the first days of July, Gierek cautioned against raising salaries since it was a source of inflation. The workers replied by broadening the strike movement. By the middle of the month the party leadership appealed for discipline, but the number of enterprises on strike became even greater. On August 12, an important member of the administration, later dismissed, announced to foreign correspondents that the "massive strikes" have ended and that only "partial stoppages of an economic kind" were continuing. Two days later, the Gdansk naval shipyards went on strike with workers protesting the preventative firing of Mrs. Anna Walentynowica. Forty-eight hours later, the nation heard a radio and television speech by the Prime Minister. No one paid any attention and, in reply, at Gdansk the MKS (Inter-Factory Strike Committee) was organized to draw a list of 21 demands — some of them eminently political. The government then named a commission to examine them but placed at its head the man least suited to negotiate with anyone — especially with workers. He had to be dismissed five days later. Effect: the strike spread to the entire Gdansk complex. On August 18 Gierek gave a new speech in which he used — for the first time. — the word "strike". After that, the

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media was at last able to use it. Events multiplied rapidly. But neither the threat of Soviet intervention — made from the very beginning of the crisis and relayed obligingly by part of the Western press — nor changes at the top of the party and the state, nor the firing of the head of the official unions and the promise of reforming them from top to bottom, nor even a quite ambiguous sermon by Cardinal Wyszynski re-broadcast — an unprecedented event — on television (censored) succeeded in weakening the determination of the Gdansk workers. Similarly, during this last and interminable week of August, the strike extended all along the Baltic, among the metallurgists of Nowa Huta and Wroclaw, toward Silesia, threatening to become general. It took all this to make the administration agree to sign the accords with the Gdansk strikers and Szczecin. A few days later a third agreement would be signed with the miners.

The Workers' New Strategy

Since Prof. Lipinski's letter to Gierek in April 1976, there was no lack of warnings that in the near future a new workers' uprising would occur in Poland. Among the numerous scenarios for this uprising, proposed more in conversations than in writing, no one anticipated at all what happened in the summer of 1980. They envisaged, rather, an explosion analogous to that of December 1970. Only the proponents of the "new evolutionism," Jacek Kuron and Adam Michnik, saw the perspective of a peaceful transformation of society, able in time of changing the very system of institutions. But their forecasts, like all others, each for different reasons, were both confirmed and refuted. This is not meant as a criticism, but only to show the scope of this event — the strike which ended with the Gdansk accords — and which, like other great historical events forecast by many, was a surprise to everyone. Though in certain respects recalling events of the past, it was striking for its originality and unprecedented spontaneity. Even the word "miracle" leaped spontaneously to the mind of anyone who wanted to talk about it. And a miracle it was if, to paraphrase Mickiewicz, one admits that the Divine Spirit, only author of real miracles, was wearing the blouse of the Polish workers in the summer of 1980. As in 1970 and 1976, their movement organized itself, set its own goals and its leaders came from the ranks. But this time, avoiding earlier ruts which led nowhere, this movement invented, imagined and translated into practice a mode of action which placed the government in a position of weakness, plunging it into disarray. An innovation of this calibre, affecting the behavior of millions of individuals, could become conceivable only through the convergence of many factors. Among these, an important role was played by the relatively high level of education, and the age (about 30), of a great number of militants in the movement who, if they did not receive their baptism by fire during the strikes and revolts of 1970-1971 and 1976, nonetheless remembered them vividly. On the other hand, the workers, especially the young ones in the great industrial centers, no longer belong to the first generation of city-dwellers who were lost in the city and the factory. They were born and feel at home there. That is seen clearly when their strikes are compared with those, much more delayed and less politicized, of the "worker-peasants," very numerous in "Poland B."

But what contributed to giving their amicable daily contacts a political content, to establishing and broadening the networks of solidarity and confidence, to making known certain persons particularly courageous in facing the authorities or with a knack for leadership, were clearly the efforts by the dissident-opposition in aiding the persecuted strikers of June 1976 and their families, in putting out *Rabotnik* (the journal

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of KSS-KOR) written for workers and sometimes distributed by students at the factory gates, in defending the militants of the Committees to Establish Free Unions, in commemorating the victims of December 1970 in memorials organized in Gdansk in 1978 and 1979 and in other manifestations, etc. Moreover, the very existence of KSS-KOR, which has become a real national institution, made possible an effective action — even if limited to the enterprise level. For, to be heard, there was no longer any need to go out on the street. It sufficed to go on strike and to make oneself known to a collaborator of this organism. The next day, thanks to the Western radios and the press, the matter was known in Poland itself and abroad. In this regard, the role of KSS-KOR before the strike had reached Gdansk was inestimable. Later, after the arrest of its most active members, other currents of dissident-opposition took the relay. It is the "flying university" that, along with clubs of Catholic intellectuals, gave the strikers the advisers they so urgently needed to negotiate effectively with government representatives. The dissident-opposition thus was one of the factors that made possible the workers' new behavior and prevented the repetition, on a larger scale, of the drama of December 1970. Was it the critical factor? This is something else.

Between June 1976 and July 1980, two events occurred, whose consequences for Poland were literally incalculable: the election of Karol Wojtyla to the Papacy and the trip he made to his country in June 1979. By erasing old frustrations with one strike, by replacing with a new pride the inveterate feeling of being an irrelevant people, unknown in Christendom and Europe, by consecrating the work of the Polish church and, indirectly, of all forces opposed to the regime, the election of John Paul II raised hopes which had formerly been forgotten. It also gave the *coup de grâce* to official ideology, perceived as foreign, compromised by the cupidity and duplicity of its adherents, both contrasting shockingly with the disinterestedness and honesty of an important fraction of the clergy. And the Pope came, preceded by a covert and surreptitious propaganda which, based on "well-informed sources," warned against uncontrollable mobs, multiplied the number of victims of the Mexico journey, tended to arouse in the intelligentsia a fear of the "people," in the urban dwellers a contempt for the rustics, in everyone the fear of being robbed, trampled, suffocated. But the Pope came and none of this happened, though the government chose to stay out of the picture, leaving order in the hands of amateurs led by priests and seminarians, and the problems of planning to the ecclesiastical apparatus. Everything went peacefully and harmoniously, in a most disciplined manner but with gentleness and smiles. The Poles saw, felt and understood what till then they merely knew: that they number in the millions sharing the same faith. If they approach it right, they could act in concert and, while maintaining order, impose their will on the government as they were able to impose on it this papal visit — this immense cross planted in the center of Victory Square in Warsaw, these nine days of real festivity, indissolubly religious and national. All this, of course, does not quite adequately show the link between John Paul II's visit and the astonishing tranquillity of the strikers who, especially in Gdansk, proceeded as if they knew with ultimate certitude that nothing could prevent their victory. But, lacking the documents which may emerge some day, there are all the Masses celebrated during the strike, all the religious symbols opposed by the workers to those of governmental power, the Pope's portrait, finally, attached to the main gate of the naval shipyards whose official patron is called Lenin.

The Gdansk Agreement

These observations are meant to explain neither the militancy of the Polish workers,

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which has roots in a remote past, nor to analyze the profound causes for their conflict with government officials. It is just an effort at identifying some factors which could have led workers to invent the strategy which was theirs all summer and which culminated, on August 31, in the signing of the Gdansk Agreement. A document without precedent or equivalent, the text of this agreement was produced by a similarly unprecedented negotiation. For the first time in history, an essentially totalitarian government, master of the police, the security forces, and the army, of the media and censorship, owner of all factories, having the right to protect itself by all means, based on laws which it wrote for its own convenience, agreed to negotiate with its subjects on a program prescribing limits to its own power. Of course it did not do so voluntarily. Immobilized by the workers' calm pressure, whose power increased from day to day, and paralyzed by internal dissensions, at that time it had no other choice. But it did negotiate, and that alone would have sufficed as an admission of failure. It was not a failure of its armed forces, which were not even used — thus, even knowing whether they were at all usable. It was a serious failure of its claim, under cover of the Communist Party to represent society as a whole. Sitting down on one side of the table facing the MKS executive committee, government and party leadership were finally admitting the conflictual and pluralist character of society.

The extraordinary significance of the Gdansk Agreement can be read even in the titles of their signatories and the layout of their signatures: to the right those of the four members of the government commission with, at their head, a vice-president of the Council of Ministers of the People's Republic of Poland; to the left, those of the eighteen members of the MKS executive committee. Ratified by the highest party authorities, the Gdansk Agreement, like the two others also signed by the vice-presidents of the Council of Ministers, are thus official documents which impose on the government a series of obligations: to permit the creation of unions independent of the party and of the employers and to assure them the conditions to function under restrictions dealing mainly with the right to take a public position on decisions concerning the workers' standard of living; to guarantee in law the unions' right to strike, while seeing to it, until this law is passed, that no one be subjected to repression for having participated in a strike or aided the strikers; to present to Parliament within three months a bill on censorship, defining its limits; to open the media to religious denominations, permitting in particular the radio-broadcasting of Sunday Mass; to review the cases of all those fired after the 1970 and 1976 strikes, and of students expelled from the universities at that time and, if the decisions they had suffered under were irregular, to reinstate them; to transmit to the Minister of Justice the cases of political prisoners; to guarantee freedom of expression in public and professional life. The government, moreover, committed itself to speed up work on economic reforms and to take several more specific steps concerning market-supply, salaries, retirement, health services, etc., as well as to publish the complete text of the Agreement — which was done on September 2, 1980.

But the accords also place an obligation on the MKS, speaking in the name of the new unions: "In creating new, independent and self-managed unions, the MKS declares that the latter will respect the principles defined in the Constitution of People's Poland. The new unions will defend the workers' social and material interests and have no intention to play the role of a political party. They are founded on the principle of the social ownership of the means of production, the basis of the socialist system existing in Poland; they recognize that the party plays a governing role in the state and does not oppose the existing system of international alliances." The meaning of

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this passage comes out clearly only if compared with Article 3, Paragraph 1, of the Polish Constitution: "The political force governing society in the building of socialism is the Polish Communist Party." Clearly, the Gdansk Agreement, while recognizing the "governing role of the party" confines it to the framework of the state and hence imposes on it limits unforeseen by the Constitution. This amounts to legally sanctioning the coexistence of a totalitarian state with a non-totalitarian society. But in thus legalizing a situation which was already beginning to exist in fact, its nature was being drastically changed: from precarious, always endangered and dependent on the party's good will, it became solid and incontestable. Or, rather, it could become so if the people wanted to use their recently acquired liberty. Clearly, they wanted to. The union of writers, as well as that of journalists and typesetters, the Academy of Sciences, the universities, youth organizations and a number of other organizations and institutions have already given themselves or are in the process of elaborating new statutes ratifying their independence. Since the signing of the Gdansk Agreement, a powerful shock-wave has swept across Poland, causing numerous local tremors and upturning the political, cultural and social terrain, often to the point of making it unrecognizable.

The problem of the evolution of Soviet-type regimes thus permits solutions which no one seems to have foreseen and which will have to be kept in mind from now on. For, based on the Polish experience, it is conceivable that under pressure of a powerful social movement — i.e., a labor movement, no other category having comparable strength — such a regime is transformed, first *de facto*, then *de jure*, into a hybrid formation where the state remains the domain of the single party or, more exactly, of its apparatus, while society conquers a liberty, supervised of course, but with limits set by law. The coexistence of a totalitarianism, ineradicable without provoking Soviet intervention, but, in contradiction to its nature, contained by laws, and of seeds of democracy which cannot realize all their possibilities, especially in the sphere of state power, is, without a doubt, highly unstable. It would be unable to avoid conflicts between the party apparatus and the unions, associations, Church, press, etc. But such conflicts always risk to degenerate into open confrontations and to trigger either the restoration of a more coherent totalitarianism, or a victory of democracy, much less probably as long as the final decision on this score belongs to the rulers of the USSR.

For whoever regards things not as a theorist interested in stable solutions, but as a participant, even from a distance, the essential question is, however, one of time. In 1956, during the Polish October, numerous observers considered it impossible in the long run to retain an individual peasantry and a Church with restored liberties under a Soviet-type regime. *Sub specie aeternitatis*, perhaps they were right. But we live in time, and twenty-five years, in our lives, is a lot. But now this situation has already lasted for twenty-five years. Is it possible then, that during the next twenty-five years the party, retaining its "governing role in the state" will succeed in coexisting with the independent unions? Would this coexistence be very stormy? *A priori*, such an eventuality could not be ruled out. But sticking to facts, any answer must be set aside as premature.

The period Poland is going through now involves many dangers. Elements of the apparatus, which have everything to lose if the reform is pursued, either because of their Stalinist views, or because of their notorious incompetence, or, finally, because they have misappropriated public or other joint funds, is beginning to organize resistance. Feeling betrayed by the leadership or by influential members of it, they are

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perfectly capable of concerted efforts using all means still under their control. Will they go as far as to set fire to the powder-keg in order to have a pretext for calling the Soviets to the rescue? What was holding them back in July-August no longer plays a role as soon as they no longer recognize the leadership's authority or of the new First Secretary. They must, however, take into account the attitude of the Soviets who can — but until when? — prefer a political solution, also of the Polish armed forces and of the country's general climate. So many unknown factors. For everyone, observers and participants, the situation is confused and its further developments remain unforeseeable.

Whatever they may be, however, and we can still hope they will be favorable to Poland and to Europe, whose destiny is being decided in Poland, the summer of the 1980 strike, with it acme, the signing of the Gdansk Agreement has already gone down in history, memory and legend.

November 16, 1980

SOLIDARITY'S TASKS

by Tadeusz Mazowiecki*

In my view, the following are the main problems that Solidarity will have to confront. The first problem concerns the new trade union's attitude toward the country's economic situation and the necessary economic reforms. Official circles have defined the situation as "catastrophic" and "dramatic." On many occasions, Solidarity has stressed that it was aware of the gravity of the situation and that it wished to contribute to the search for solutions. Having asserted its willingness, Solidarity took a very important stand. But in order to really contribute, it must be given the means. Clearly, before everything, Solidarity must organize itself and give serious thought to the question: What does it mean "to contribute toward the overcoming of the crisis"?

There are two possible extreme attitudes, neither of which is really good. The first one, which crops up from time to time, involves minimizing the role of unions and limiting it only to increasing work discipline and to mobilizing people. From this perspective, any demands or control would be considered damaging. The other position entails the opposite: unions should be indifferent to the country's situation and focus only on workers' interests, without regard for its repercussions for inflation. Neither position is right.

The crisis is very complex: it is not just an economic one — even though for the most part it is being felt on the economic level. It is also a crisis of credibility and confidence, i.e., a political crisis. Undoubtedly, improvement in the quality of work is

*Tadeusz Mazowiecki was president of the commission of experts, formed August 21, 1980, at the request of workers from the all-plants Strike Committee of the Gdansk naval yard. Today, he is one of the Solidarity experts and, as a journalist, he writes for the Catholic monthly *Wiez* (*The Link*). This is an extract from an October 7, 1980, conference at the Warsaw Club of Catholic Intellectuals (KIK); it is reprinted here from the unofficial review *Glos* (*The Voice*), n. 9 (October, 1980), published by KOR. Translated by Eleni Mahaira-Odoni from *L'Alternative* n. 8 (January, 1981).

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a crucial point which can contribute effectively in overcoming the crisis: as soon as we have the certainty that, thanks to institutional means of control, the results of labor will no longer be wasted and that the union will indeed constitute such a control mechanism, we'll probably overcome this crisis. Obviously, this role does not involve the trade union alone; the latter, however, remains a determinant social factor in the workers' defense against the wasting of their efforts. In this sense, the formation of a genuinely independent trade union and, consequently, the creation of a control mechanism, constitute a factor for improving the economic situation — an institutional factor which might make it possible to overcome the crisis of confidence. All of this becomes thinkable when the trade union has some control and, above all, can organize itself.

As a result of the Gdansk Agreement, the trade union must have a voice in general matters concerning the country, such as the economic plan, budget allocations, etc. But it is just beginning to function and must be able to prepare for this role. It is not simply a question of obtaining concessions concerning the workers' status on paper alone. While also accounting for inflation, it must elaborate a plan of action which will prevent the workers' status from worsening and will also allow for a fair allocation of the national budget as well as an equitable wage system. The discussions at Gdansk and elsewhere have shown the importance of equity in solving problems of compensation — as opposed to bureaucratic applications of the salary grid. On this issue, the union must define its position through discussions with economists, but not limited to them. As an example of such discussion, let me mention here the one published by *Tygodnik Powszechny* (*All People's Weekly*, a Catholic organ). It is an interesting, highly controversial, but definitely constructive discussion. We need many polemical exchanges of this kind — especially within the union itself. The union must participate in similar national discussions and should force the government to respect the outcome — even to the extent of submitting the renewal program for discussion by society as a whole and control its implementation through an independent union. The latter is committed to reforming the administrative and management systems. This will also enable us to reform workers' self-management — which cannot continue in its present form — and to discuss the effectiveness of controls through plant personnel. Clearly, the union cannot accept the responsibility for managing the economic system. It is not prepared to assume it and, in any case, this is not its role. But neither can it remain indifferent to the economic situation or to necessary reforms.

The second immediate problem of the new union involves the development of negotiation strategies. The August documents, as well as the October 3 declarations from the one-hour warning strike, have emphasized that the strike is a very difficult weapon and that it should not be wasted mindlessly. Since it is an extreme means, difficult to implement and very costly to society, it becomes necessary to move on to normal unionist activity — provided, of course, that the union can be constituted and have access to information. This is why, aside from resorting to strikes, it is necessary to elaborate other, long-term negotiation strategies in negotiating with the state and its administration at all levels, as well as in the economic management sector, at the level of both the individual firm and the country as a whole. Only in this way will the union be able to react to problems created by others (e.g., by the administration); and only then will it have a chance for taking initiative in negotiating. The main problem of the new union is to master the fundamental questions, in order to make sure that its participation does not become perfunctory, as was often the case with the old unions. The new union must show its members the effectiveness of its negotiation strategies — not just strike effectiveness. This requires a general climate of confidence.

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The third problem concerns controlling the cost of living. The Gdansk Agreement provides that the union be consulted and given the means for analyzing increases in the cost of living. It must have access to economic statistics, know how to make its own analyses, and elaborate control mechanisms. Its demands should be feasible while also remaining just.

The fourth problem concerns the union's attitude towards the country's public life. The Gdansk Agreement deals with the question of political prisoners, radio broadcasts of mass, access to the media and censorship. Clearly, the union cannot be indifferent toward any aspect of the country's public life; it is concerned with problems such as censorship, educational reform, etc., and since these questions interest all workers, they should have a chance to express their voice.

The last problem has to do with internal questions. Following democratic discussions and thorough, sober thinking, the union will have to elaborate an ideological stand. Everywhere in the world, union declarations begin by stating that the worker is not just a worker, but also a human being with personal dignity. This is exactly the point: we must start by affirming the dignity of every worker, the dignity of work itself, the dignity of a society whose structure rests on the worker and, from there, move on to a substantial union ideology. One of the greatest concerns among new union militants is to not lose contact with workers. Therefore, what the union must create is a democratic internal climate sensitive to all its members' opinions, in order to avoid a sclerosis of union structures. The trade union needs inspiration from many viewpoints to strengthen discussions leading to an ideological position, for until now, inspiration has been coming from exclusively official sources. It is not a question of expurgating the trade union but of turning it into a genuine reflection of Poles' opinions, of their ideas on ethical problems, on questions of human relations and equal rights. As trade union activity grows, contradictions will pile up and they too will contribute to the elaboration of an ideology. All of this will require conciliations and discussions in order to preserve what has become the union's power: solidarity.

NOT TO LURE THE WOLVES OUT OF THE WOODS: AN INTERVIEW WITH JACEK KURON*

Q: Mr. Kuron, the Eastern block summit two weeks ago in Moscow eerily recalled the events of 1968 when the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia was decided upon. Have you already heard the sound of tanks in Poland?

Kuron: The Russians know that an invasion would mean war and that it will be militarily and politically a very hard war. Therefore they do not want to invade us. However, the stakes are so high that under certain circumstances we must take such a possibility into account.

Q: What sort of circumstances are those?

Kuron: That is a matter for speculation. But one thing is certain: when the life of the nation is at stake, the greatest caution is required — whether we like it or not.

Q: Where does the boundary run that must not be crossed?

Kuron: We must assume that the boundary — at least today — would be crossed if the government collapsed. But below this threshold of danger we cannot put the brakes on

*Published in *Der Spiegel*, n. 51 (December 15, 1980). Translated by David J. Parent.

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the people's expectations, even if we wanted to. What we are dealing with is a tremendous social democratization movement in all possible strata. The independent self-managed union Solidarity is just a part of this movement and at the same time its symbol. This movement can no longer be stopped.

Q: As a member of and spokesman for KOR-KSS, you surely feel a certain satisfaction....

Kuron: I would prefer to answer your questions in my own name.

Q: Fine. Still it seems important to state that four years ago KOR predicted with astonishing accuracy both the current situation in Poland and the process that led to this situation. The new federation of unions, Solidarity, supported by yourself and your friends, was able to a large extent to impose its demands on the government. But relations between the state and the workers are still very tense. What is the cause for this?

Kuron: One of the causes is repeated violations of the Gdansk Agreement by the government. When, for example, the workers in Ursus responded to the arrest of a union-member and co-worker of the independent press "Nowa" with a strike, that was just a natural consequence.

Q: You call that one of the causes. And the others?

Kuron: The main difficulty is that the people's attitude towards the government under which they have had to live for three and a half decades is characterized by frustration and increasing antipathy in all areas. The result is that when any conflict arises between Solidarity and the government, no matter on what question, we always get tremendous support. On the other hand, any understanding, however favorable to the union it may be, arouses dissatisfaction, or — to use perhaps a better word — dissapointment, among the people.

Q: In past weeks, you or other KOR people have had to warn the workers at factory meetings several times against taking any rash steps. Why are workers so angry?

Kuron: The frustration, tensions and aggressions are not clearly articulated. Even if the threshold of fear is increasingly lowered, certain taboos still apply. When people are fighting for wages, they are concerned for wages *also*, but not exclusively; they are also concerned with all those rights and freedoms which they do not have yet.

Q: So it is more a matter of a symbolic conflict.

Kuron: Every conflict here is partly symbolic.

Q: How would you describe current relations between workers and intellectuals in Poland?

Kuron: A certain difference of attitudes has been emerging in the last few months; not an antagonism, not a conflict — just a difference of attitudes.

Q: How is this manifested?

Kuron: On the one hand we have the already-mentioned frustration, which is conditioned by the deteriorating economic situation and the authorities' incompetence, while the erosion of the threshold of fear has resulted in an increasingly open expression of the growing general aversion for the government. On the other hand, there is Poland's general situation, geopolitically and internally. Because of external factors, the government's fall is out of the question, and an improvement of people's living conditions is impossible because of the country's economic situation.

Q: So there is a contradiction between the people's expectations and the possibilities of social reforms?

Kuron: Yes, and this contradiction is a result of the general situation. Workers are becoming increasingly radical, while intellectuals, who are more sensitive to the outside danger and who can more graphically picture the possible effects of the

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economic situation, are increasingly cautious and conciliatory.

Q: Do you believe that the government, i.e, the party, can reform itself?

Kuron: If we start with the fact that we will have to live with this compromise for a long time — a society that is becoming more democratic, ruled by a communist party — then, of course, it would be better if the party mustered up enough strength for an inner reform. But I know too little about that and have no way of influencing it. I have to think in terms of my own categories. Thus I must start with the assumption that the party will not change. If it did, however, so much the better.

Q: How solid is Solidarity — as an institution and as a mass movement with considerable explosive potential and a charismatic leader?

Kuron: Naturally the charisma of a labor leader plays a role, but it is not the most important factor. Solidarity is much more important. Cooperation with the government based on compromise will succeed only to the extent that the radical and the conciliatory wings within the movement agree.

Q: Are the differences of opinion of these wings limited to their different attitudes toward the government?

Kuron: At the moment, yes. But we must expect tensions to develop between the various groups and centrifugal tendencies. These tensions have hitherto been pushed into the background because of the conflict with the government. After all, we are dealing with a movement that includes millions of people but has at its disposal neither tested forms of organization nor the necessary experience.

Q: Then, what chances are there for a coexistence between democratic, pluralist unions and a monolithic party?

Kuron: I am not thinking just of pluralist unions. Developments have gone far beyond that. I am thinking of a democratic pluralist society, i.e., pluralism on the level of corporations, cooperatives, consumer associations, economic self-managements; different self-managements; different cultural associations, sponsorships, etc.; an organized farmers' movement, a movement of citizens' initiatives, of discussion clubs designed to work out certain concepts, centers whose task would be to integrate individual programs. And, of course, also unions.

Q: And how should the interplay of these pluralist movements function in a state ruled by the communist party?

Kuron: Institutional forms have to be created to enable these pluralist movements to organize and cooperate. A system for society to function must be worked out.

Q: But how can that be reconciled with the leading role of the party?

Kuron: It is a matter of a system in which the social structure can be established from below, while the decisions of principle are coordinated with the central authorities of the communist party.

Q: That presupposes the communists' readiness to cooperate. Does the party, which still calls itself Leninist, want and be able to do that? Will it be able to accept so much pluralism?

Kuron: It must. This country can no longer be governed in any other way. I repeat: this entire democratization movement comes from below, from the populace, which are increasingly well-organized. Thus, it forces the government to give in. The government must, whether it likes it or not, meet the people's demand for more pluralism, more democracy — it must cooperate.

Q: Then you regard the party not only as your opponent, but also as a tactical ally?

Kuron: Insofar as we — that's how I picture it — build up this pluralist structure in stages and gradually dismantle totalitarianism, step by step. Very slowly. The

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goals of the government and of the democratic movement are completely opposite. But the struggle between the two tendencies, the totalitarian and the democratic one, are to be fought exclusively by peaceful means. The observation of this rule by the government will determine the degree of the partnership you mentioned.

Q: Everyone in Poland is talking about reforms. Are there any concrete models for this? Perhaps the Yugoslav one?

Kuron: As far as the economic system and the strucures connected with it are concerned, Yugoslavia's example could certainly be useful. But there is one fundamental difference. In Yugoslavia reforms came from above, from a strong communist party with great authority. Here, however, reforms are coming from below.

Q: Still, Yugoslavs are not completely happy with their system.

Kuron: We are also aware of that system's serious disadvantages and we want to avoid them. But those are technical details. The macro-economic solutions are much more important. Since we are, as I said, dealing with a mass movement, reforms will have to be undertaken with the participation of society and decisions will have to be made more democratically than in Yugoslavia at that time.

Q: In your opinion, how far can Solidarity's collaboration with the government go, for instance as far as common commissions?

Kuron: If you had asked me this question a few weeks ago, the answer would have been: the union should be just a union. Responsibility for collaboration with the government in matters of reforms rests with the self-managements, the peasant's movement, the cooperatives, cultural associations, etc.

Q: You would have said that a few weeks ago. Are you now of a different opinion?

Kuron: We are in a special situation today, because the country's situation is really tragic. Solidarity has tremendous power. It must no longer hesitate, it must show the way out of the crisis. It is no longer just a question of reforms, but of a solution.

Q: Not much can be seen yet of the separation you demand between the unions and self-management. Actually, self-management associations and similar movements that are springing up want to join Solidarity as soon as possible.

Kuron: That is understandable. But I hope that in time we will succeed in separating these movements and making them independent of the union.

Q: Are the self-management organs supposed to be independent of unions even in the factories?

Kuron: Absolutely. Solidarity must push through the concept of self-management, but as an institution it must be absolutely independent of unions.

Q: Why is self-management's independence from the unions so important?

Kuron: Because it is impossible to occupy simultaneously the employer's and the employee's standpoint. A labor self-management will necessarily represent the enterprise's, i.e., the employer's, interests.

Q: Then, as in Western democracies, unions should represent only employees interests?

Kuron: There are very different views on this. On the one hand, it should represent only workers' interests. But at the same time unions are regarded as gains won from the state, i.e., as a kind of alternative force from which everything is now expected. Though this tendency is understandable, unions cannot fulfill all of the people's expectations. The establishment of other self-managed movements and institutions is thus all the more urgent.

Q: In your opinion, where should the communist party's monopoly of power be maintained?

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Kuron: In the police — which, of course, does not mean that they can stand above the law —, in the military, in foreign policy. The communist party must also have a role in the central administration, which makes it possible for it to exercise its influence on domestic policy.

Q: That can mean very much or very little. Can you be more specific?

Kuron: In this case, in a state whose basic factors are state power and society, to exercise influence means to understand oneself as *just one* of these two factors, and to act accordingly. Beyond that — and that is very important — the government must be able to implement everything agreed on in negotiations and compromises. It was agreed that censorship should be subject to strict controls. Its powers ought to be as narrowly circumscribed as possible, limited by the right of those affected to appeal in court, to challenge censors to publish newspapers with white spots instead of objectionable texts.

Q: What importance do you place on such guarantees?

Kuron: They are significant only when they are connected with social organizations independent of the state. These organizations are the decisive thing, the key to it all.

Q: What role can and should the West play in view of the Polish changes?

Kuron: I do not wish to evade this question, but I do not know. It is important that people in the West know and *understand* what is taking place in our country. The support of our movement by Western public opinion contributes to the stabilization of this movement.

Q: You stressed the word understand. *Are you saying that the events in and around Poland are not understood in the West?*

Kuron: The Poles are very upset by the hysterical manner in which some Western mass media, especially Polish-language radio broadcasts, report the danger of Soviet intervention. The tone of some Western publications may give the impression that the Poles are themselves to blame for the threat of a Soviet invasion.

Q: Is it just the reporting and not the danger itself that upsets the Poles?

Kuron: A strange situation has arisen. We, who live in Poland and are directly exposed to the potential danger, believe we have the situation in our country under control and are able to democratize our social life without causing tanks to roll. The West, however, which in the opinion of many Poles shares the blame for our present situation, screams and has the tanks already rolling. A Polish proverb says: "One should not lure the wolves out of the woods."

Q: If they want to stay in the woods! Don't you think that the communique from the Moscow summit two Fridays ago was intentionally formulated to sound like a last warning to Poland?

Kuron: Not at all. I regard that communique as a further attempt to put pressure on the Polish people. They are supposed to restrain themselves because of this threat and not dare to continue in the direction of democracy.

Q: And how will the Poles act in view of this threat?

Kuron: That is the main problem. We must not stop where we are now; that would be dangerous. The communist party's former power monopoly is already broken and the democratic reforms sought by society have not yet been realized. So, if all the institutions I mentioned in this interview are not quickly established so that the existing and ensuing conflicts can be solved peacefully through them, then — and only then — the worst could happen. Then the danger zone would actually be crossed — the fall of the communist government which is in charge of maintaining Soviet influence in Poland.

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THE RECONSTRUCTION OF SOCIETY*

by Kazimierz Wojcicki

A Lasting Compromise or Temporary Concession?

Polish authorities have not yet decided whether to treat the Gdansk Agreement as a lasting compromise or a temporary concession. Many recent actions by the authorities indicate that they often opt for the second.[1] One of the first things they did after the accord was signed was to try to steal a number of the strikers' demands. One after another, the totally compromised old unions declared themselves in favor of the strategy adopted by the party, i.e., to be "independent and self-managed." The leadership of these unions voted for the dissolution of its central board (CRZZ). With the help of the "disinformation" disseminated by the media, the slogans of independence and self-management were to be adopted by the old unions. Next, the authorities' strategy was to launch the call for a "union of the union movement" — a slogan that gave rise to anxiety since the old unions with which the new ones were to unite were so-called yellow unions led by the bosses.

To account for the dilemma facing authorities now — whether to try to implement the Gdansk Agreement or thwart it — it is useful to examine the intervention of Mieczyslaw Rakowski, who at the time of the seventh plenary session of the Communist Party's Central Committee was editor in chief of *Polityka*. Rakowski is known as a liberal communist. Yet he speaks of the need for the new unions to adapt to the system rather than the system to the unions. He openly supports interference in the new unions' internal affairs. This acquires particular importance in light of another campaign directed against the so-called anti-socialist forces: the campaign against activists in KOR (the Workers Defense Committee), the Confederation for an Independent Poland (KPN) and the Movement in Defense of the Rights of Man and Citizen (ROPCIO). It should be recalled that a number of the new union activists and leaders such as Walesa or Switon participated in the 1976-80 democratic opposition. Thus, the struggle against anti-socialist elements can evolve into a means for meddling in the new unions' affairs, with the aim of submitting the nominations of union leaders to the party's veto. Communists have often employed this tactic before to control political adversaries.

A lasting compromise requires authorities to choose a different path from that of Rakowski. The system must be adapted to the new situation whose decisive factor is the existence of independent unions. This would mean a profound change in the

*Originally published in *Esprit*, January 1981, pp. 52-62. Translated by Brian Singer.

1. *Editors' note:* Six months have passed since this article was written. Documents, especially ones that were never meant to be made public, indicate beyond the shadow of a doubt that the party hierarchy is still frantically looking for ways to neutralize Solidarity. A recent issue of *Der Spiegel* (April 6, 1981) has published a secretly taped speech of Andrzej Zabinski, a Polibturo member and first secretary of the Communist Party in the Katowice province (Gierek's old power base). Zabinski's speech focused on the following strategies: (1) party members should hold dual union membership (in Solidarity as well as the old unions); (2) Solidarity must be isolated from KOR; (3) the idea of unionization on a regional basis — as opposed to being structured along types of industry — must be strongly attacked; (4) the need to combat Solidarity with legalistic means; (5) use of fear as an intimidation tactic; (6) the attempt to complicate everything to the point of utter confusion; (7) the use of perquisites to corrupt the Solidarity leadership. This speech was delivered sometime in the beginning of 1981 to a special audience: officers of the police and of the state security forces.

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system. If the regime wants to recognize unions as autonomous partners, it must give up its monopoly in many areas. Solidarity is too large to be accommodated by the old way of wielding power. The interpretation of the Gdansk Agreement as a temporary concession to be eventually withdrawn leads to a confrontation with society. Given the new unions' power, the authorities could win only with external aid.

Consider the problem from the new unions' perspective. The workers said: "There was October 1956, December 1970, June 1976; several times the thaw was announced and every time the ice came back."[2] Now, they say, we must organize things so that the renewal cannot be placed in question; we need guarantees. Thus, during the first strikes in July and August, workers demanded written assurances that there would not be reprisals against strikers. This demand for a signed document was not naive, but rather a new attitude of workers who, having been stung before, began to learn the dry language of laws and regulations.[3] Having lost the hope and confidence in the system that was so evident in October 1956, the workers now demand specific and rigorously defined concessions.

The initial strikes made only economic demands because strikers were isolated and it was easier for unorganized workers to formulate and coordinate wage demands. But the weak price increases were only the last straw rather than the root of the problem. Already during this first phase of the strike (July 1-8), wage demands were clearly tied to the principle of a just and equitable remuneration. Workers were not demanding primarily basic wage increases to compensate for the increase in meat prices, but other things as well: remuneration for unhealthy or night work, as well as allocations for large families, etc.

The next stage was the general strike in Lublin, in late July.[4] There, for the first time, social and union demands were mixed in with economic demands. What was

2. The "thaw-freeze" cycle is a metaphor employed to describe the last 25 years of Polish history. The system's cyclical crises were first analyzed systematically by W. Bienkowski during the 1960s in his book, *Moteurs et Freins du Soxialisme*. W. Kuczynski's study, *After the Great Leap,* recently published in the series *Scientific Notebooks* of the TKN and devoted to the Polish economy of the 1970s, provides an excellent illustration of these mechanisms.

3. The opposition's publications were not widely distributed among workers (the biweekly *Robotnik* had a press run of only between 10 thousand and 20 thousand copies). Special mention, however, should be made of the pamphlet *The Citizen and Security Services*, ironically subtitled *A Guide to Social Life in Poland*: "Anyone who undertakes any activity whatever, and does not have in his library *The Constitution of the Popular Republic of Poland, the Convention of the Rights of Man and Citizen, The Code of Penal Procedures, the Code of Penalties* and *The Penal Code* is like a traveler who starts out with neither map nor compass. The goal here is not to indicate ways of getting help, but one of the possible paths in the struggle for the respect of the law. And this path is to require authorities to respect the rights they themselves have established."

4. Consider a fragment from the journal *Jednosc* (Unity), No. 1 (August 24, 1980), published during the Szezecin strike by the MKS in the Adolf Warski shipyards. "Today, Sunday, the seventh day of the strike for the shipyards and numerous other enterprises in Szczecin and its region. Our MKS now represents 120 enterprises. Some of them have to work, for their services are indispensable for our city. . . . Since the first day of the strike, the authorities were presented with the strikers' demands contained in 36 points already known by the people of Szczecin. For the strikers the most important demand is the foundation of free and independent unions. The activity of present unions in Poland does not respond to the workers' hopes. These unions are entirely subordinated to the party and only rarely defend workers' rights. As a result, there is a total lack of confidence in this institution. These unions provide for the submission of unions to the party. Thus, it is in violation of the principle according to which union leaders must be elected by their affiliates. This renders impossible the guarantee of the defense of workers' rights. In such a situation, one cannot accept any attempt to reform these organisms — in December 1970 and even more during the present strike. The old union leadership has not been on the side of striking workers."

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demanded was the reorganization of local union structure and free elections of their leaders. There, for the first time, a leader appeared who enjoyed a lasting authority with his comrades: the railway man Czeslaw Niezgoda. It is also there that the strike gained an aura of social solidarity. The large factory of Swidnik appropriated somebody else's demands for health services: a large enterprise representing a powerful force took under its tutelage a group of disenfranchised workers.

Initially, authorities ignored the strike. When this was no longer possible, they tried to present it as a purely economic strike with no social content. In early August, Gierek could still have reversed the situation by anticipating the workers and giving them what they won a month later. However, his two long-awaited interventions proved to be complete fiascos: he appeared on television as someone who understood absolutely nothing of what was going on in his country.

The large Gdansk strike began in mid-August for reasons other than economic ones: the reinstatement of two dissident shipyard workers, Anna Walentynowicz and Lech Walesa. Once the demands of the Lenin shipyards were satisfied, the strike stopped. It immediately picked up again, however, because several enterprises had joined the movement and the shipyards had, for reasons of solidarity, to coordinate their action with the others. More factories joined, the list of demands became longer until finally it reached 21 points (one of the strike's most popular slogans was "21 — yes"). It is noteworthy that only after point 7 on the list of 21 is there any mention of economic demands.

The authorities willingly accepted a large part of the workers' demands, mainly the economic and social ones. They were ready to admit that the old unions were compromised and to agree with the need for their renewal, while ignoring demands for independent unions and avoiding negotiations with the MKS (Inter-Factory Strike Committee). The authorities agreed to open discussion with workers while refusing to meet with their representatives. The first governmental commission sent to Gdansk, led by the Deputy Premier Pyka, sought to break the solidarity between striking enterprises, which by that time numbered several hundred. Pyka suffered a total defeat and was replaced by Deputy Premier Jagielski.

Here the governmental commission had to learn a totally new style of dialogue and negotiation with society.[5] The workers beat the representatives of power with their spontaneity, their direct language and, above all, the truth and simplicity of their words.[6] It has been noted, not without malice, that under the workers' influence, Jagielski was transformed in a few days from an apparatchik into a statesman. MKS remained firm, though, and the demand for independent unions was essential. The entire battle centered around this demand. Experts who came to the shipyards to aid the workers played an important role by virtue of their professional knowledge. But the symbolic meaning of this cooperation between workers and intelligentsia was even more important. Although the experts had acted on their own initiative, they were treated as representatives of the group responsible for the August 20 appeal signed by first 62 and later by more than 200 intellectuals, in support of the strikers and urging the government to undertake direct negotiations with MKS.

In September and October, I worked in a consultation center for the constitution of new unions. Many times the people with whom I was dealing had to lead a hard battle

5. *Editors' note:* For a detailed account of the early discussions between Jagielski and the workers, see Jule Gatler-Klenk, *Lech Walesa und die Solidarität* (Athenaum Verlag: Berlin, 1981).

6. Numerous opposition journals that are not subject to censorship (*Robotnik, Biuletyn Informacyjny, Glos,* etc.) published detailed chronicles of the events and local strikes.

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with the factory management, which threatened and "disinformed" them. But they were very determined people — even if some of them appeared timid, overcoming fear only with difficulty. They had one very clear goal: organize the unions. They said, "This is our chance," "We must profit from it." At meetings, they carefully avoided subjects with political ramifications such as, for example, relations with the Soviet Union. Most of these people had an ambiguous attitude toward the democratic opposition (i.e., in their opinion, the political opposition). They sympathized with it, were fascinated by its mystique, and yet could not help feeling removed from it. Such an attitude was partly owing to official propaganda. But, above all, it expressed the desire to be the master of one's own house. By organizing unions, they wanted to create something of their own, independent *even* of the opposition. Among most activists, however, the need for solidarity with the opposition in case of repression was accepted without reservation.

Revolutionary Times?

Those who have lived through these months in Poland know that the joy of unconditional victory was constantly accompanied by anxiety and fear. Tension has not yet been relaxed. Scorn, fear, but also determination are mixed with joy and a feeling of satisfaction. In the face of these events, it is tempting to define them as revolutionary. But this would not be appropriate. The atmosphere of the July and August events was not that of a turning point, crisis, revolt, nor wild, spontaneous abandon. Workers did not consider their demands utopian, as a challenge thrown to history or an enlargement of human possibilities. Rather, they saw them as the rehabilitation of their rights, the restitution of accepted values, recognized as an integral part of their culture, customs and morals. At no time was there an explosion of emotions which precipitates people into the unknown and through which social and political events are transformed into a sort of festival where their liberation, emancipation and deliverance are mixed on an existential level as well as a social one. An extremely important role was ascribed to religion — recall the solemn masses in striking factories — which colored events with a mood of meditation and reflection on essential questions. It is impossible here to describe the strike's rich iconography. It will suffice to point to the pope's portrait on the shipyard's main gate. Also significant is that the graffiti on the walls expressed more irony than aggression toward those in power.

To define more precisely the strike's atmosphere, it has to be emphasized that demands and hopes remained at all times within a concrete, well-defined framework. The dominant feeling was not that of a conquest of the future or a revolution in norms, but of a rehabilitation of norms and a return to normality through the elimination of a provisional aberration.[7] To paraphrase Marxist terminology, it could

7. Thus, one could read in *Wolny Zwiazkowiec* (Free Unionist, Solidarity's information bulletin published in the steelworks of Katowice one month after the agreement was signed): "A social contract has been signed indicating that the Poles, for whom the good of the country remains the supreme end, can finally speak the truth, and that it is time to restore to the words justice, honesty and responsibility their only, centuries-old meaning. The guarantee for this new contract, recognized by the government and the party, is the existence of the independent and self-managed unions. Although unfounded, during these days of strike, everyone has experienced an anxiety aggravated by frightening threats. The feeling that we were struggling for a just cause dominated, but it has been very difficult to shake off the weight of decades of lies and hypocrisy, lack of respect for men and things. 'Now or never,' said the most courageous. We are proud of having found ourselves among the true patriots, such as we have proved ourselves to be. How many vicissitudes in September would have been able to throw us into an impasse!"

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be said that the system's political superstructure, generally considered as imposed by force, was adapted to its socio-cultural base. The term "guarantee" means, among other things, conditions in which this superstructure will cease to violate the norms of that socio-cultural base.

What has surprised observers of the Polish events is something that already attracted attention during the papal visit in 1979: the people's calm and level-headedness. But it must be added that this calm concealed determination. During the strike, in the difficult days of waiting for the opening of negotiations, a worker at the shipyards said: "It has got to change, even if (Russian) tanks come." This worker understood perfectly the need for the measure and for composure, but at the same time he was convinced that what was demanded was the absolute minimum. The demands betray the presence of a desperate struggle; prudence was clothed with firmness when it was a matter of demanding what were considered elementary rights.

This spirit of determination is a consequence of the country's recent history, as well as the assault on human dignity.[8] Moderation along with obstinacy and firmness characterized the general attitude. Emotions were bridled; they were too numerous to be expressed. Everyone knew the price that would have to be paid if emotions had exploded.

An Atomized Society?

What are the reasons for this moderation? What kind of society adopts this attitude? The stereotypical image of totalitarian society, as brilliantly depicted in the now classic works of Hannah Arendt or Erich Fromm, is that of an atomized mass governed by a centralized apparatus. The means of domination is an ideology that allows manipulated individuals to identify their submission with the predominant and omnipresent power. These analyses, otherwise excellent, must be approached cautiously in the case of Poland. What is most surprising there is that a society under a totalitarian system was able to retain such a high degree of organization and autonomy. This fact points to a major difference between societies under an indigenous totalitarianism (the classic analysis of totalitarianism applies to such societies) and societies where totalitarianism has been imposed from the outside. Sociological studies show that the most cherished values among Poles are the family and friends, on the one hand, and the fatherland and nation on the other (not to be confused with the state).[9] Nowak has defined this gap between the two sets of values as a social vacuum. Poles live in circles of family and friends, and they are little involved in public life and, above all, in the life of institutions that they purportedly govern. Institutions, says Nowak, are often perceived as hostile, malevolent, dishonest and sometimes even threatening. This perception of "the sphere of institutional life... is probably an important factor in the strength of ties among groups at the base."

This thesis of the social vacuum could easily confirm the vision of an atomized society and, consequently, the classic image of totalitarianism. However, what such an analysis would only see as atomization is actually a conscious reaction of society in defense of its acquisitions. The reliance on family and friends bears witness to the system's powerful pressure. It is a means of defense that allows the preservation of a

8. Challenged by party journalists who, along with the communists, once again claimed legitimacy on the ground of having been victims of the Nazi occupation, a young Silesian worker responded: "The Germans killed your entire family. I am very sorry, but my family (perhaps on a reduced scale) perished in the same fashion after the war, at the hands of the functionaries of the UB (security police)." In *Wolny Zwiazkowiec*, No. 8.

9. The following remarks are based, among others, on Stefan Nowak, "The System of Values in Polish Society," published in *Studia socjologiczne*, No. 4 (1979).

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given society's culture, be it only in its customs, conversation, mentality, personality and character traits, when that becomes impossible in public or institutional life. The more powerful the external pressure, the more elementary the defenses. These defenses are cultivated and reduced to a highly cherished ritual, since they can be neither developed nor transformed freely. The last manifestation of collective identity remains the global value of fatherland and nation.

Societies such as Poland are avid for modernity (hence the great interest for anything coming from the West) and at the same time very careful to preserve their identity. They constantly dream of changing their destiny at the same time that they retain the minutest of their customs, because to lose them would mean losing their identity and thus losing their way. They are potential societies; societies in waiting. While looking for a better future, they remain hung up on their past and think in terms of historical rather than social categories. The social discourse of these societies speaks of their present crust while history preserves their form, not present but potential. They are societies awaiting their rebirth. Social transformation for them is not an intoxicating adventure in social experimentation or a march toward utopia, but an awakening to a life whose values, defined by their history, are concrete and in a certain degree limited.

Even if these formulas were to reflect only part of the truth, they can still clarify the July and August events. The independent unions, or every other form of autonomous organization, so surprising in a society which appeared completely deprived of its will, does not signify the reconstitution of social ties, but the re-establishment of more complex structures where there had been elementary forms. It is the reconstruction of society on the basis of that which had not been totally destroyed. The end of revolution is the demolition of a shaky edifice which sometimes collapses with one blow. The reconstruction of a society which guards, inscribed in its historical genes, the values of democracy and pluralism proceeds slowly. In the Polish situation, it can and must be effected under the cover of a ramshackle edifice which, for our own security, must not collapse on our heads. Everyone in Poland is conscious of this.

Two voices are competing to describe the processes occurring in Poland over the last few years, culminating with last summer's events. The first speaks of a social movement, of the increasingly better organized masses, and is characterized by its populist orientation. The unions seem to be the vanguard of this movement.

The second way of looking at the events uses historical and juridical language. It proclaims the need to create independent social institutions, to salvage from the party's omnipotent apparatus a field of social activity, to develop autonomously different forms of collective activity. From this viewpoint, the present struggle in Poland is cultural rather than political. There is greater confidence in the initiative, even scattered, of different people and groups than in the ability or even the need to inspire this process through organizational efforts.

These two languages are not totally antagonistic. In practice, they often support similar actions. The differences, however, are important. The first viewpoint proclaims the need to politicize society, the second declares the radical need for its depoliticization.

This difference, at first glance simply theoretical, has implications in the debates about the recently created unions. According to the first view, unions are a catch-all for all kinds of social activities. They would become unique, large and powerful. They would become part of a pluralist system even if their internal pluralism did not function perfectly. The unions would be a social movement and would adopt forms suitable to the needs of the moment.

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The second vision speaks of the need for strictly limiting union activities to issues typical of union identity, constructing a deeper juridical awareness, influencing union activists in relation to the particularities of their tasks.

These discussions have practical consequences for establishing unions in factories. The alternative is the following: should the latter be factory councils, parliaments of workers charged with numerous tasks, including the co-management of the factory, constantly politicizing themselves, competing with the old unions in electoral campaigns for factory committees — or should their activities be strictly limited to problems relating to the workers' living conditions or defense of their rights? In this regard, the unions should resist politicization and every independent and extra-union activity should involve its own struggle to conquer its place and field of action. These are the problems that are faced today and which are difficult to decide once and for all.

In reflecting on these alternatives, it must be remembered that the march toward democracy is tied to the growing complexity of the social world. When approaching this end, i.e., democracy, one may become more pragmatic and lose sight of principles. For this reason the question of the future of Polish culture is posed. By aspiring to democracy, is Polish culture going to lose this sense of values, which today seems evident and priceless? But these questions cannot be resolved in Poland alone. They are, rather, bound to the future of European culture.

THE 1980 POLISH STRIKE AND THE STRIKE CYCLES IN THE 1970S*

by Renate Damus

Within East European countries during the 1970s, Poland's economic development is marked by special ups and downs. Thus, in dealing with the causes of Polish economic and political crises, a distinction must be made between structural problems typical of all existing socialist systems and specific mistakes of Polish economic policy.

In 1979 the GNP declined by 2% (instead of growing, according to a modest plan, by 2.8%). This was an alarming signal for existing-socialist party bureaucrats for whom socialism is distinguished from capitalism by a greater growth rate. But it was also an alarming signal in terms of the socio-economic situation of the population (in the early 1960s declining rates of growth had led to economic reforms — even if only technocratic ones). In economic terms, the negative growth of the entire economy is composed of a lower growth of industry (2.8%) and a negative growth in agriculture (minus 1.4%). Statistically, this negative result did not have its full impact on private consumption, which rose by 2% per capita. The negative growth and the per capita rise result from the fact that the investment quota (i.e., the share of investments in the national product) declined. Wages rose, because of inflation, in real terms only by 1.8% (the year before, however, they had sunk by 2.6%).

The Western press mainly stressed the problem of meat prices, because attempts to raise them, in 1970, 1976, and 1980 respectively, triggered work stoppages; or the

*Published in *Links*, October 1980, pp. 14-17. Translated by David J. Parent.

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indebtedness to the West, in regard to East-West economic relations. In 1979 the deficit in foreign trade with the West could, as in the two previous years, be decreased (1.6 billion dollars); indeed the total exports rose to double total imports (12.2% exports, 6.3% imports). At first, that does not seem all that negative, but it must be remembered that: (1) the reduction in foreign trade deficits is less a result of higher exports than of reduced imports; (2) in 1979, Poland had the slowest growth rate in exports in the COMECON; (3) import restrictions, because of some sectors' high dependence on imports, led to short and long term losses of growth; (4) the increase of production in the export sectors of the processing industry was too slight, i.e., the growth strategy of the seventies did not succeed; (5) therefore, traditional sectors must provide the exports which, however, has a negative effect on the supply of basic foods for the population (e.g., meat); (6) less raw materials and fuels could be imported, which led to production stoppages; (7) the terms of trade (the ratio of export and import prices) worsened both in East-West and also in COMECON trade (a rise in import prices by 8.7%, but of export prices by only 5.2%). The income from energy exports (coal) was for the first time no longer able to cover the cost of energy imports (oil); (8) the impressive rates of growth in the first half of the seventies were achieved through credit-financed imports from capitalist countries. The consequence is that Poland's indebtedness to the West today amounts to about 20 billion dollars. Since the present level of dependence on imports prevents their being arbitrarily reduced, any import restrictions result in a decline in growth while indebtedness continues to grow. (So, in the future, it can only be a matter of decreasing the growth of the debt.) The interest rates for these loans are higher for Poland than for other East European countries. New loans only pay back old loans (e.g., the 1.2 billion German marks repayment to West German banks). The interest burden already comes to about 40% of the principal.

Against this background, the obsolete guidelines of the Central Committee for the 1981-1985 Five Year Plan show the "helplessness" of the party leadership: the switches are set neither for reforms in the planning and guidance systems nor for industrial, agricultural and infrastructure development geared to overcoming economic misery. "Planned economy" is restricted to limiting the worst, self-produced quantities, i.e., to overcoming production scarcities in the energy, transport and consumer areas, combined with the declared intention to eliminate the foreign trade deficit with the West and to decrease indebtedness to the West. The planned growth corresponds to the base values of the last Five Year Plan Periods (about 3%); in agriculture only a 2.4% growth had been foreseen. It is thus a matter of a mere stabilization plan, with small adjustments — and this on the basis of unrealistic preconditions: growth through higher labor productivity with declining investments and stagnating employment. Accordingly, workers are being asked to make major contributions. But what is supposed to move them to greater labor intensity or productivity?

Meat and Democracy

How could it come to this in the 1979-80 years, when one sees the "prosperity" of the first half of the seventies on a chart giving the most important statistics on Poland's economic development between 1970 and 1980? After the December 1970 unrests, the 1971-75 Five Year Plan, which was to continue pushing economic development at the expense of consumption, was still developed under Gomulka. The new Five Year Plan provided for an increase of investments and of private consumption, and also an increase in foreign trade (in which imports were to rise faster than exports) — but all with moderation. This plan did not differ basically from those of the other East

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European countries — with the possible exception of Hungary. After economic reforms had failed to bring about economic success, and also involved the danger of "mistaking" decentralization for democratization, "really existing socialism" was created: intensive growth was to be attained through greater labor efficiency. This was in turn supposed to be stimulated by improving the standard of living rather than by beautiful visions of the future. It meant intensified foreign economic activities (overcoming the unprofitableness of small domestic markets, the lack of specialization, etc.). The COMECON's "complex program" (1971) was an expression of these concerns. In Poland — because of the December 1970 riots — more democracy was on the agenda along with more meat. The "new strategy" developed in 1972 forgot both the promises of democracy and the more cautious plan, and set its hope on massive investments to modernize industry and increase both personal consumption and social services. The government increasingly legitimated itself one-sidedly with economic achievements. The strategy of growth produced by imports (from foreign capitalist countries on credit), according to the macroeconomic data for 1971-74, showed remarkable successes: (a) real wages rose by 7.2% (instead of the planned 3.4%); (b) labor productivity in industry rose by 7.5% (instead of the planned 5.4%); (c) social services improved (inclusion of farmers in health insurance, higher children allowances, longer maternity leaves, increase of old age pensions); (e) meat consumption increased by 30%.

But problems became evident if one considers that: (1) investments in industry rose to a much greater extent than did private consumption, i.e., the share of the investment quota in the national income increased heavily at the expense of the production quota; (2) the share of agriculture and of the non-productive area (e.g., housing construction) in total investments decreased compared with the 1966-70 five year period; (3) despite price controls, food prices in the state stores were 10% higher in 1975 than in 1970 (because of price increases in the private markets and the resulting scarcity in the state stores), and the prices of clothing and shoes were 18% higher; (4) agricultural production, after climbing between 1971 and 1973, declined in 1974; (5) imports grew significantly faster (in all by 23.6%; from the West by 40%) than exports (19.2%, but only 21.7% to Western countries).

The Polish leaders' plan was to modernize industry rapidly with credit-financed imports from Western industrial countries, and then to pay off the investment credits by means of the products so produced (i.e., by a changed industrial export structure). Over half of the industrial plants in use at the end of 1975 began operation in the course of the five-year period. But since wages and living standards also rose (despite shortages, inflation, etc.) the national income spent exceeded national production — or in Ulbricht's terms: the spoon was bigger than the bowl.

This policy could not succeed because it neglected several factors: (a) capitalism too undergoes crises, and cannot purchase the existing socialist products as desired; (b) one's own economic system delays the benefit of investments; (c) in certain sectors a dependency on imports arises, and so imports cannot be decreased at will; (d) imports, together with credits and interest, bring about an enormous indebtedness; (e) the neglect of agriculture and of the non-productive area because of the low standard of living cannot be compensated for with industrial consumer goods with rising prices; (f) moreover, it did not consider at all that the intitiated technological push does not create its own dynamic, but needs constant repetition.

Capitalism as Midwife

The policy of detente with its primarily economic emphasis both in the East and in the West (the closing of the technological gap on the one hand, and the opening of

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Eastern markets on the other) had especially bad effects in Poland's case. Contrary to the intentions of the "complex program," which aimed for greater cooperation between or economic integration of COMECON countries, the policy of detente brought about in all countries (except Czechoslovakia, because of 1968) such a strong Western orientation that the effects of the world economic crisis today can be felt in all countries. But in no other country was capitalism used as midwife of such a forced industrialization policy of intensive growth as in Poland. Even without a world economic crisis and rising energy prices (also on the part of the Soviet Union) this capitalist induced "growth" would have been hard to digest in a really existing socialist country. Economic policy and system structures are too far apart.

On the one hand, the policy of detente did lead to recognition of the Soviet empire (e.g., the Helsinki Accord); on the other it can, with a corresponding socialist policy, lead to economic dependence and so to an internal erosion of really existing socialism. In a positive sense, in the respective national territory, it contributes to bureaucratic-technocratic reforms and makes demands from below more feasible. Therefore, in principle not much can be said against a policy of detente on political grounds, although it is primarily a detente between the power elites. Even economically, in principle there is no objection to a world integration, nor can it be held responsible for Poland's economic misery. The question arises, rather, as to who domestically decides on the kind of integration into the world market, e.g., on the production-structure, the export or import structure, and the rate of economic development. The neglect of agriculture, of long-lasting industrial commodities for normal private use (e.g., furniture) and of the non-productive area (e.g., housing construction and the health system) show which stratum initiated and planned this "modernization."[1] This idea of growth was not implementable in a really existing socialist economy.

This is shown by the factors of the apparent and, in part, real boom, especially in labor productivity and its development. According to Brus' calculations,[2] labor productivity in Polish industry and agriculture rose in 1972-73 in a way that would not have been possible without workers' greater willingness to work. Besides hope of economic changes with the replacement of Gomulka by Gierek (for which reason changes of personnel no longer "worked" in 1980), changes in wage and income policy and in the system of economic planning and management can, according to Brus, be regarded as causes. At any rate, industrial productivity rose more than the "capital"-to-work ratio. In agriculture, the increase of the state purchase-price, the abolition of mandatory deliveries, and improved social services paid off.

The Lack of Economic Reforms

But already in 1974 a rise of the GNP could only be brought about by a significant rise of the capital-to-work ratio. Despite the mighty "modernization push," the ratio of the national income to capital wealth was only 108.8% in 1975 compared with 1970. Capital productivity (output in relation to plant and equipment) was very moderate compared with capital intensity (ratio of plant and equipment to labor). This is surely connected on the one hand with disappointed expectations and increasing everyday difficulties caused by the one-sided industrialization policy, which enormously relativized wage increases (large and small price increases, excessive demand, i.e., supply shortages, waiting lines, housing scarcity, state stores, etc.), but also with the

1. Cf. *Prokla*, n. 27, 1977, p. 20ff.

2. "Ziele, Methoden und Politische Determinante der Wirtschaftspolitik Polens (1970-1976)," in *Berichte des Bundesinstituts für Ostwissenschaftliche und Internationale Studien*, n. 49 (1978), p. 13ff.

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economic system that produces the vanishing of material, long lead times in the utilization of investments, production failures, stoppage periods. If one retains these system structures, then one should at least count on their economic effects, i.e., not adopt an economic policy that banks on as rapid as possible a rise of capital productivity.

The leadership one-sidedly blames the economic crisis and the increase of raw material prices for the ensuing shortfalls of economic development; and in agriculture, no less one-sidedly, unfavorable weather conditions. But other social factors can be mentioned for the negative development in agriculture that began in 1974 — especially the farmers' uncertainty as to the future agricultural policy of the state-party. Government sales and transferrals of land to private owners declined enormously in 1974-75, the tax burden on the farmers increased, investment credits declined, materials such as coal and feed grains became scarcer, so that fodder had to be imported, while land lay fallow as a result of government policy. The farmers received only higher prices for their agricultural products — at the expense of the urban consumers and without the farmers' being able to establish a meaningful existence on their uneconomic small farms, indeed without a reduction of the income-gap between city and country. Accordingly, the yearly rate of growth in agriculture sank from 1972-73 (8.4 and 7.3%) to 1974-75 (1.6 and -2.6%).

But if the overall economy between 1971 and 1975 is taken as a whole, the numbers are impressive. Such overall data, however, do not say very much in an existing socialist economy, since setbacks do not occur through lack of demand (and thus immediately falling growth-rates), but economic difficulties appear in the shortage of supply in consumer-relevant areas — so investments can still continue to grow briskly. Not only did supply not keep up with increased demand; there was now even a decline since temporarily imported food and consumer goods now had to serve for export (including commodities in short supply, such as furniture and shoes). Expenditures continued to be concentrated on subsidized food, while the prices for industrial commodities rose. The state-run Western-currency shops multiplied, and even offered for sale such "products" as apartments.

An overall economic reform was not undertaken in the first half of the seventies. The only things done were: (1) larger economic units were created (both horizontal and vertical), whereby a certain decentralization was linked with organizational concentration; (2) foreign trade and the export industry were to be integrated, i.e., the export industry was to be made to feel the external prices positively and negatively as a stimulus to performance; (3) a reward system was to stimulate production.

As early as 1974, under signs of the coming difficulties because of excessive expansion, even these half-measures were generally revoked (with the exception of concentration). Such "experiments," however, would have been better left undone, since they merely contributed to the uncertainty and so tended to decrease initiative. Reforms pay off economically only when, first, there is an overall plan (in contrast to an "open plan," in which the lack of a plan was made into a virtue) and, secondly, the enterprises (management and labor) can presume that everything will not be changed and recentralized again with the first difficulties. The workers self-management in the factories, conceded in 1956 and then gradually restricted, was not kept active. (There the Hungarian leadership is systematically more logical: in the process of economic reforms, which also resulted in higher prices and loss of jobs, unions were also strengthened from the top down — for they can, apart from their social functions, also act as a control mechanism over the plant management and as a means of containing labor dissatisfaction.)

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The Soviet Union and Meat Prices

Moreover, in 1975-76, conflicts about constitutional changes ensued in the directly political area. Against resistance articulated by intellectual circles, the leading role of the communist party and the special relation to the USSR were anchored in the constitution. This special relation to the hegemonial power had even previously been adopted in the East German Constitution and can be regarded as a corollary to the policy of detente. The USSR wants assurances that detente stays in the economic area, and so the national communist administrations made political concessions in order to have a free hand in economics to use East-West relations to increase their standards of living, which was necessary for growth and legitimation. And finally it makes clear to the people what detente cannot be. In this situation the raising of meat prices was, so to speak, the signal for the outbreak of the disturbances — a signal given by the government itself. Secondly, it brought about what had failed in 1968 and 1970: an alliance of workers and intellectuals that actually proved itself in 1980.

As an isolated measure, the raising of meat prices is absolutely necessary, if it is kept in mind that subsidies today make up about 40% of the national budget, and contribute to an increased one-sided demand with all its consequences; the end-products then are, in part, cheaper than the products purchased from the farmers, so that hogs sometimes are fed good bread. Since this is not a historical treatment, it is unnecessary to describe developments between 1976 and 1980. The causes of Poland's general situation today must be sought in the economic and social policies of the first half of the 1970s. Without a new rigorous plan, the situation could only get worse — as the opposition predicted already in 1976. One does not reduce high import and investment rates so quickly unless one wants to cause even greater growth-losses and thus rob the initiated policy of all its fruits. But this also increases indebtedness. This leads to exports which affect the basic living standard of the populace, which in turn lowers initiative and efficiency.

The 1976-80 plan was not a plan designed to break out of this vicious circle; renewed disturbances were programmed into it: (1) without an economic reform investments could not be expected to lead to corresponding rises in productivity; (2) investments were supposed to decline rapidly; finally the ratio of the total net investment to the national income in 1975 was 38%.[3] Since, moreover, projects begun had to be continued, new investments were kept at a low level; (3) the meat shortage was planned in once again;[4] (4) with an unchanged agricultural policy, the problems in agriculture were built in, since increases in productivity are scarcely possible when — apart from the fact that 27% of the farmers have just over 2 hectars of land — of the remainder, 60% also have only less than 7 hectars.

The "Social Contract"

The workers' 21 demands and the agreement between the government and the inter-factory strike committee in Gdansk show how aware the workers are of the overall economic situation, how much they react to this in an overall economic and social way (e.g., the consideration of the material and "ideal" interests of other social groups such as farmers, health employees, intellectuals) and they show readiness, if sufficiently informed and consulted, to contribute to the respective producers. The observance of this social contract between the rulers and those ruled, though in many areas it is very vaguely formulated and will have to be complemented by laws, seems to

3. According to Szlajfer, this rate of accumulation broke all known records including those of Japan and Brazil; cf. *Prokla*, n. 27 (1977), p. 27.

4. Cf. Brus, *op.cit.*, p. 53.

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be the only possibility, even economically, to get out of this catastrophic economic development. At the same time its observance is hardly imaginable: (a) The demands implicitly question the party's leading role, and not just the demands for free unions, but also those dealing with the area of economic and socio-political decision-making. After all, the authority to decide on economic policy is not an economic but a political question, i.e., a question of system. Free unions in such a system almost necessarily become an opposition party; (b) The demands are not limited to economics (like the reforms in Hungary), but also affect the political system (media, civil rights, etc.) and so in the long run also that of the sister parties (causes of the invasion into Czechoslovakia); (c) Even if top party leadership wanted to fulfill the demands, which it could afford to do as long as it is not questioned, the interests and privileges of the lower ranks in party-, state-, economic and union-bureaucracy are affected. To the extent that the system itself cannot be changed in principle, they have something to lose and nothing to gain. In view of the USSR's position and its domestic relations, development can be conceived only in evolutionary terms in Eastern Europe. Detente and really existing socialist economic problems which get worse rather than better, create possibilities or force a situation which on a national level makes possible mainly economic experiments along purely technocratic lines. (That is, as a rule, though then perhaps the standard of living may benefit somewhat.) At the same time, however, conditional possibilities of participation may be opened up. In the Gdansk Agreement, the limits to participation set by the system are exceeded on paper: a partial fulfillment would already be a lot. But without this, Poland is heading for its next economic crisis and, consequently, a political crisis of the greatest dimensions.

COMPARISONS

by Ivan Svitak

"A zvolas-li Slovan, necht se ti ozve clovek."
("If you address a Slav, a Man should answer.")
—19th century panslavist, Jan Kollar

Like the Czechs in 1968-69, the Poles are seeking a peaceful structural change of a communist system — a socialism with a human face. Thus, they are trying the impossible: they are squaring the circle and that is why they deserve our admiration. If the movement remains limited to a defensive strategy of the unions and if it will not grow into a real democratic revolution, their attempt is unfortunately bound to fail. Were it to succeed, the Soviets will intervene, and everyone knows that the present dual government cannot continue.

The Soviets do not want to intervene militarily, but intervene they will and must, irrespective of Polish assurances that Poland does not wish to leave the Warsaw pact. The Czechs used to say the same, but that did not prevent the intervention, because what is at stake is not a military pact, but the existence of a bureaucratic dictatorship. Although the Polish free unions respect the communist party's leading role in international politics and in the armed forces, and they do not deny the privileged role

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of the central bureaucracy, they threaten the global role of the Soviet Union much more than if they simply challenged participation in the Warsaw Pact.

In both Poland and Czechoslovakia, where the masses have taken initiative in the midst of an economic crisis, the bureaucratic apparatus has failed so badly that without military or police action, the Polish bureaucratic dictatorship cannot overcome its own paralysis — not even after the whole Politbureau has been replaced. If the Polish bureaucrats will not intervene, the Soviet bureaucrats will, because they know the dangers. However, so does Lech Walesa, and, thank heavens, he is not a Dubcek.

Polish and Czech social structures are quite different, because the Polish working class is relatively new, farmers represent an independent force, and intellectuals as leaders have lost in previous crises (1956, 1970), so they do not crave a new defeat. Because of this, the Poles do not confuse politics with literature, critical novels with national development — as the Czechs do these days — and they are immune to the curse of the Prague Spring, when a literary journal posed for a few months as a center of strategic planning. Victor Hugo believed that the fate of literature was identical with the fate of a nation, but when the Czech reformed communists tried to prove it and forgot the Marxist alphabet, their actions led to a complete disaster in literature — and to the nation, for which they cared much less.

The national characters of Czechs and Poles differ substantially. The Poles know that the last two centuries of Polish history have brought a chain of defeats, and that struggle does not guarantee success, but they also know very well that to accept the risk of defeat is a much better alternative to living on one's knees. The only thing that delays the Soviet intervention is the Soviet politbureau's certainty that Poles are not Czechs and are willing to fight. The suppression of the free unions will take place only *after* this heroic Polish readiness will pass. It will not take place while it lasts, because the Soviets would have to risk a war in Central Europe, not just a smooth occupation as in Czechoslovakia.

The leadership in this battle is not in the hands of reformed or unreformed communists, as it was in Prague, but in the hands of workers' representatives. The pressure from below is the main difference between the Czech and Polish events, and the general strike — or threat of it — is the decisive weapon, which the Polish unions are constantly using. The Czech reformist "heroes" used the same weapon in August 1968, just for one hour — and during a lunch break to avoid production losses! — to demonstrate national unity against the Soviet army. Immediately afterwards, the delegate of the reformed communists' assembly was flown to Moscow to sign a shameful capitulation and later succeeded in selling this national shame as a TV show, justifying this disgusting betrayal as a triumph of the Czech reformed leadership. In one year, the Polish independent unions will be paralyzed one way or another — so was Gomulka's program in 1956-57 — but the experience that the producers of surplus value can cut off its own power elite from its economic power, that will remain a triumph of true socialism. The consciousness of this alternative will remain as ineradicable as the Prague Spring mass movement.

An intervention of the Czech type will not take place in Poland: instead, a slow infiltration of opposition centers, the increase of Soviet military presence, and police actions on a large scale will neutralize the "extremists" and divide the movement. If the Soviets did not hesitate to kidnap the lawful government of a communist ally in Prague and to assassinate their own man in Kabul, will they hesitate to liquidate the "counter-revolutionary nests" in Gdansk and elsewhere? The Soviet shock troops might take action in Polish uniforms, because they are so skillful in the organization of confusion, as were the Nazis in Polish uniforms who attacked the German — yes, their own — radio

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station in Gleivitz, in August 1939 and thereby started World War II. But the Soviets' goal is not a military occupation of the country — that has never been interrupted — and the repetition of August 1968 is inappropriate. While the methods of breaking the opposition will be different, the goal of self-preservation of the bureaucratic rule is the same.

Union leaders are trying to place some limits on their own rebellion, while the power elite is trying to restore its absolute powers irrespective of the obvious fact that it has brought the country to the brink of economic collapse and that it is unable to feed its own population. Soviet and Polish bureaucrats are willing to tolerate some liberalization or democratization, but only if subsequent waves of repression would sweep away the results. While the Czech reformed communist power elite was completely unaware that their democratization can start moving on reverse gear, the Poles in the government and in the opposition know from their own experience that, after the high tide of liberal reforms in 1956 and 1970, the ebb wiped out the reforms and left the workers in a worse situation than before.

In Poland, a *de facto* pluralism of new power centers, i.e., the communist party, the Catholic church and the unions, is a living political reality, not just a declaration of principles in an Action Program of the Czech Communist Party (April, 1968) which succeeded in fooling most of the nation with this April Fool's joke. The *de facto* participation of non-communist power centers in real political life makes return to the absolute control of the Polish Communist Party rather hard — but possible — and creates the classical revolutionary situation, in which the old power elite is unable to rule by the old methods and the masses are not willing to accept the old conditions of a monopoly of power. The obvious solution is a democratic revolution. But this is the very step which would bring about an immediate Soviet military action. Since the crisis has no exit, it is bound to become a permanent crisis.

The liberalization of a Sovietized society is thinkable but it cannot be immediately put into practice either in Poland or elsewhere. All liberalizations or democratizations tolerated by the Soviet Union, are only temporary manoeuvres which should disguise the economic collapse of so-called "real socialism." The Polish liberalization is a new attempt to square the circle and so, with the Polish events, the Soviet regimes in all East European countries have entered a period of a general, protracted and growing crisis. The eighties will bring a tougher Russification policy in Eastern Europe, and an absorption of East European economies in the Soviet empire, because the total structural crisis of these regimes can no longer be concealed and no amount of ideological indoctrination can prevent political disintegration. Yet, the immense repressive potential of a bureaucratic dictatorship can stabilize the governments by an Afghan-style colonialist and imperialist intervention. The panslavic program will achieve its goal, and if you ask the Slav brother a question, the Soviet brotherly submachine gun will answer.

Studies in Soviet Thought

Editors: THOMAS J. BLAKELEY, GUIDO KÜNG, and NIKOLAUS LOBKOWICZ

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION: 1981, vol. 22 (4 issues). Private: US $23.50. Institutional: US $74.00
Private subscriptions must be sent to the publishers.

D. Reidel Publishing Company
190 Old Derby St., Hingham, MA 02043, USA.

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THE STRUGGLE FOR THE MEDIA IN POLAND

by Andrew Swidlicki

In one of the most important documents to come out of Eastern Europe in the past decade, *The Report of the State of the Republic and Ways to Rectify It*,[1] the malfunctioning of the mass media in Poland is recognized as a major source of tensions. The mass media's lack of credibility is linked with the leaders' lack of credibility, and a reflection of the overall malfunctioning of the system as such. Because of frequent changes in the style of propaganda and censorship practices, staffing the media with mediocre personnel for political reasons, and generally treating the media as an instrument of manipulation, public opinion in Poland does not have access to the state-controlled media. Thus, the Poles treat news with habitual skepticism. In the opinion of the Editorial Team that compiled the report, "the mass media has for all practical purposes ceased to be an instrument of even current communication between the authorities and the public — not to speak of other functions."

In the long-run this situation is self-defeating for the party since it cannot know society's real feelings. As a rule, the media reflect the current "line." During Gierek's years (1970-1980) "propaganda of success" was the norm. Its purpose was to create the impression that the country was undergoing an unprecedented period of rapid industrial development. In fact, the opposite was the case: consumer expectations were frustrated, shortages became a fact of life and the country was saddled with a huge foreign debt. In recent months the media has adopted the opposite attitude. Propaganda of failure followed Kania's election as the communist party's first secretary. At the same time, independent trade unions such as Solidarity came on the scene. These two events are closely linked. Badly shaken by last summer's vote of no-confidence in the system, the party was unable to agree on a program to restore confidence. Instead of looking for a lasting solution to the crisis, the party leadership resorted to propaganda attacks and blaming it on Solidarity leaders, their advisers, and "anti-socialist forces." Solidarity's lack of access to the media soon became an issue in its own right. Instances of the authorities not honoring the agreements signed on the eve of last summer's strikes multiplied. With over 10 million members, Solidarity could not present its views in national press, radio and TV. Even when access was granted, Solidarity's communiques were censored.

The intention of the agreement signed on August 31, 1980 at the Gdansk shipyard between the government commission and the Inter-Factory Strike Committee (MKS) was to make the mass media more sensitive to the concerns of society. The newly formed independent trade unions were granted the right to establish their own publications. The need for new legislation on censorship was also agreed upon and the government pledged to propose appropriate legislation on the subject to a parliamentary committee within three months. Guidelines for the government proposal were laid down to define the scope of censorship and limit its arbitrariness. The two sides also agreed that the press should report more fully than in the past on the activities of administrative bodies and it should be given greater access to official documents. The propaganda machine — radio, TV, press and state

1. Soon to be published by M.E. Sharpe Publisher.

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publishing houses — should not continue molding public opinion but express a variety of opinions. The mass media should also be subject to social controls. The third point of the agreement signed in the Katowice steel plant on September 11, 1980 clarified what was meant by "social control" of the media. It demanded that "information on the activities of the new unions be publicized in the media (press, radio and TV) to an extent justified by their size and significance and representatives of the new unions be allowed to appear in the media."

After the signing of the Gdansk Agreement, the so-called "dialogue" between the party and society began. The new leadership sought the people's confidence through careful steering of the "renewal process." Remembering similar past experiences, the Poles sarcastically commented: "the new returns again." Although the ruling communist party admitted incompetence and corruption, it showed itself unable or unwilling to work out a reform program aiming at solving the country's economic plight — to say nothing of submitting such a program for public discussion. Disunity and a power-struggle became evident within the party leadership. The old discredited trade unions in many cases transformed themselves into "independent, self-governing unions" by directives of their old leadership.[2] Denial of access to the media was accompanied by factory management's attempts to obstruct the new trade unions. Strikes became the accepted method of forcing management to abide by the agreements. In time, clear divisions developed within the party as well as within Solidarity. Some of the rank-and-file party members who joined the new independent unions demanded that internal party rules be observed. Others felt left out and mistrusted by Solidarity members who had never belonged to the party. This mutual mistrust between the party and Solidarity and the absence of adequate communication channels made compromises difficult to attain. A pattern emerged whereby an outbreak of new crises resulted in both sides engaging in last minute talks to avert full-scale confrontation. *Ad hoc* arrangements were made which later on were not implemented. Compromise was not satisfactory to either side. In time, new grievances arose and the cycle began anew. There were attempts in the media to further define the Gdansk "social contract." In this dialogue, with the exception of few local newspapers, Solidarity's voice was absent: it was confined to crudely-printed internal union publications. Thus, even before Solidarity's registration by Poland's Supreme Court on November 10, 1980, the new union's access to the media was recognized as one of the most important issues.

A document issued by the Founding Committee of Independent Trade Unions discusses the necessary legal guarantees for the implementation of the Gdansk Agreement and the minimum conditions binding independent trade unions as well as the state and party apparatus. One of the most important conditions is complete openness in economic and social life. In other words, existing methods of handling information by the media must be changed in order that there can be a genuine public discussion on ways of ending the crisis.

Earlier, union activists had found it difficult to share information and considerable organizational chaos resulted. In many cases, the creation of confusion was an official policy meant to support the old trade unions and thwart new ones. Economic losses supported by impressive statistics were blamed on irresponsible work stoppages. Since the very existence of Solidarity and its activities were ignored in the media, it became necessary to set up a union press operating outside channels and free from consorship.

2. This was done by the decision of an executive without consultation with the membership and according to procedures described in the statutes.

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It was amazing that during this period the Solidarity regional branches managed to keep open other communication channels and were thus able to call well-coordinated warning strikes in different parts of the country.

Trade union publications began as news bulletins during last summer's strikes. The union press's main role was to provide current information and to preserve the openness of union life. Many of these publications have already developed their own identity but criticism of the leadership is still limited. Solidarity's priority today is to create a solid organizational framework. Obtaining a decent printing press is important. Most union publication are still produced on crude machinery. Although not in financial straits, Solidarity cannot buy basic materials.[3] Sophisticated Western printing presses are not widely available in Poland where spare parts cannot be purchased and there is no personnel to service them.[4] The experience of the Walbrzych Solidarity branch in Lower Silesia indicates that trade unionists cannot use state-run printing houses without losing their independence. They tried to use these facilities but the local censor wanted to make unacceptable changes. Apart from censorship, the state security service also makes union printing a major hazard.[5] In Suwalki, in northeastern Poland, the regional branch of Solidarity did not have any printing facilities. Thus, it used amplifiers, speakers and hi-fi equipment. For three hours a day between 3:00-6:00 p.m. speakers were placed on a window of a building occupied by Solidarity and pre-recorded union communiques were played. Even there, in early December, local police attempted to confiscate the equipment but were unsuccessful.

In parts of the country where the new trade unions were strong, such as the Gdansk region, there were occasional brief mentions in the local press. In time, however, conflicts arose between the *Baltic Daily* editors and Solidarity. The editors would not print certain information about the union and censor the rest. Even where authorities made concessions to Solidarity, it did not mean that this was irreversible. Furthermore, access to the local media did not imply that the authorities were willing to grant Solidarity access to national newspapers, radio, or TV without a fight. During the two months of crisis caused by delays in registering Solidarity, the representatives of the new trade unions were not allowed any access to the media. To belittle the scope of the new unions, authorities negotiated directly with representatives of the old unions which no longer represented the workforce. The reasons for calling the first

3. Although 1% of Solidarity union members' wages is automatically deducted towards the financial needs of the union, the needed equipment and supplies are simply not available. The situation in Wroclaw — one of Poland's industrial centers — is not exceptional. Of the 433,000 workers in the region, 80% are in Solidarity. There are 1800 factories and it is a major academic center. The Solidarity Regional branch has two duplicators and access to one offset press. 50,000 Solidarity bulletins are produced every week on this equipment. The quality of paper is very poor. The bulletin itself consists of 8 to 12 pages in small typeface; material is type-written and results in poor quality reproduction.

4. According to Witold Luczywo, who runs Solidarity's printing operations in Warsaw, the most urgent need at present is for simple, technically undemanding printing equipment and materials. Cf. "Report of International Metalworkers Federation," *Visit to Poland* (*December 3-11, 1980*), Document 81-84.

5. Thus, in Radom on December 12, 1980, a search was carried out in a flat of Ewa Sobol — a member of the Praesidium of Inter-Factory Organizational Union Committee (MKZ Radom). A duplicator and a number of copies of *Robotnik* (*The Worker*: one of the papers of Poland's democratic opposition) were confiscated. According to police, the duplicator was allegedly used to run off copies of *Robotnik*. In fact a duplicator had been brought from Warsaw only the day before after having been kept for two months by customs officials (a gift from the Danish Painters' Union). Furthermore, *Robotnik* is not printed on a duplicator but on offset.

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one-hour nationwide warning strike on October 3, 1980 were the fact that government had not met pay demands, there had been delays in registering Solidarity, lack of access to the media and constant propaganda attacks on the new unions under the pretext of fighting so-called "anti-socialist forces."[6] In their resolution of October 6, 1980, the National Consultative Commission (KKP; Solidarity's national executive) made the following demands to Deputy Prime Minister Jagielski: 1) that the union be allowed to publish its own national daily paper, each edition being equal to that of *Glos Pracy* — the official organ of the dismantled Central Trade Union Council (CRZZ) — i.e., half a million copies, with the possibility of larger runs should the need arise; 2) the publication of regional periodicals with the size of each edition determined by the size of the regional union branch; 3) the publication of books and brochures; 4) access to the media in the form of TV transmissions of Solidarity press conferences at least 10 minutes in length nationally and 20 minutes locally and similar radio programs (at least 45 minutes on the national network).

The KKP resolution also included the demand that Solidarity communiques be published in the national and local press in a separate column reserved for this purpose and edited by Solidarity. This represented a particularly far-reaching break with existing press censorship. The resolution also proposed that a separate editorial office be set up in radio and TV that would deal specifically with the preparation of a one-hour program on union affairs to be broadcast once a week.

One of the reasons for the failure to mention in the media the development of new independent unions was the party leadership's lack of unity concerning how to react. Thus, it is not surprising that it was several weeks before Solidarity was even mentioned in the national press.[7] In the days leading up to the one-hour warning strike, the media initiated a propaganda campaign to create the impression that Solidarity fueled social tensions and was driving the country's economy into chaos — all of which showed a lack of understanding of Poland's international position.[8] The Mazowsze branch of Solidarity replied in the first issue of their newspaper *Niezaleznosc*: "We have confidence in the government representatives who signed the agreements in Gdansk, Szczecin, Jastrzebie and Katowice steelworks, but how can the worker who is under the threat of losing his job if he attempts to organize an independent trade union at his workplace be reassured? His fears are reaffirmed by the daily press and TV where the very existence of Solidarity and its activities are still a taboo subject." A document published by the National Consultative Commission (KKP) states that, in the course of talks which resulted in signing of the Gdansk Agreement, in view of the authorities' good will, the Inter-Factory Strike Committee (MKS) had made many concessions and left the authorities much freedom in meeting the conditions of the agreement. Despite these concessions, however, Solidarity had been disregarded by the authorities and union activists have been intimidated — especially those working in state administration and civilian employees in the army.[9]

6. Thus, the Gdansk Inter-Factory Organizational Union Committee (MKZ) stated September 29, 1980: "The lack of access to the national mass media is a crucial problem and the cause of lack of progress in negotiations at branch level." The statement also mentions incessant propaganda attacks against union activists.

7. On September 25, 1980, a Warsaw newspaper, *Zycie Warszawy*, quoted Solidarity activists as saying that a reform of the old trade unions is nothing more than a mere change of the name.

8. The most frequent argument against Solidarity was the damage to the economy resulting from the strike. Typical of this approach was the article by Jerzy Urban in *Polityka*, October 4, 1980.

9. The sackings of five Solidarity members employed in a military hospital in Lodz resulted in local strikes in mid-March 1981.

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The registration of Solidarity by the Supreme Court on November 10, 1980 had given the union legal status but had not resulted in an ending of the misinformation campaign in the media. In a separate statement on the subject, KKP chairman Lech Walesa pointed out that information in the media concerning the Supreme Court's decision was "unclear" and "incomplete." Thus, at a meeting October 31, 1980 between government representatives and Solidarity delegates, Karol Modzelewski, the union's spokesman demanded that Solidarity be allocated a supply of paper, provided with the means to print a weekly newspaper with a mass circulation, given a weekly program in the radio and TV and have editorial supervision limited to technical matters. The Solidarity delegates pledged that their publishing activity would be in keeping with the apolitical nature of the union, work for workers' interests and respect the law. The union delegates subsequently changed their original demand for a daily to a weekly paper. In turn, the government pledged to provide the necessary material and technical assistance. Regulations for union publications were to be drawn up in the near future.

Since Solidarity wanted at all costs to maintain the apolitical character of its demand for access to the media, emphasis was placed not on censorship — essentially political in character — but to the need to improve the flow of information so as to facilitate a resolution of the crisis. Yet, despite a steadily deteriorating economic situation, according to the Mazowsze region Solidarity, "objective information on the subject is still unavailable" as recently as January 11, 1981. Instead, there were scores of appeals calling for moderation on the part of Solidarity and in some cases even inviting it to share responsibility with the ruling communist party for the fate of the country. The media claimed that the collapse of the country's economy was due to strikes while Solidarity argued that it was caused by decades of negligence. The authorities' aim was twofold: 1) to create hostility towards Solidarity among the public — after all, however corrupt and inefficient it was, Gierek's regime did not introduce meat rationing — and 2) to hug Solidarity and strangle it in a warm embrace.

Solidarity's position regarding appeals for co-responsibility was unequivocal: there can be no co-responsibility in a situation in which only one of the parties makes decisions. This was clear throughout January 1981 over the conflict concerning working on Saturdays. The gradual introduction of a five-day work week was one of the provisions of the Gdansk Agreement. The authorities' view was that the country simply could not afford a 40 hour work week and unilaterally introduced their own proposal. Solidarity was not upset as much by the decision as by the way it was reached. In its January 7, 1981 statement, it underlined its right to be properly consulted by the authorities on vital matters affecting its members. The statement draws attention to the apparent stiffening of the government attitude towards Solidarity, documents the intensification of censorship and of propaganda attacks against Solidarity, detention of prisoners of conscience, etc. At that time the authorities scored a propaganda victory: they successfully distracted public attention from failure to fulfill the Gdansk Agreement to the relatively minor issue of free Saturdays. Solidarity's January 28th statement draws attention to the authorities' "arrogant propaganda campaign" over the issue of free Saturdays and states explicitly that intensified censorship urgently raises the issue of access to the media.

In an atmosphere of mutual suspicion, a one-hour general warning strike was proclaimed for February 2 over three issues: payments to workers for Saturdays they took off despite government orders; access to the media and limiting censorship; and the rights of individual farmers to form their own independent trade union. The strike

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was averted by last-minute talks between Solidarity representatives and the government. Solidarity reiterated its demands concerning regular broadcasting of its programs on regional and national radio and TV channels. The government replied that radio and TV programs were full of commentaries and news of Solidarity and therefore that the union could be said to have access to the media. The union's representative pointed out that it is one thing to broadcast commentaries on Solidarity and another to allow it to present its own view. Furthermore, in a period of renewed crisis Solidarity was being accused in the media of fuelling the tension. Agreement was reached on some issues. Thus, the total number of copies of the national Solidarity newspaper was set (at half a million copies); radio and television were to broadcast regular information on Solidarity's positions as approved by the union's press spokesman; Solidarity was granted the right to present its own view on important matters affecting its members such as a new economic plan or economic reforms; and once-a-week regular programs authorized beforehand by union representatives were to be broadcast on radio and television on trade union affairs.

Further talks were to be held February 17 to agree on the content of these programs between the Solidarity delegation and Zdzislaw Balicki, president of the government's Radio and Television Committee. But Balicki did not agree to the participation of the Solidarity delegation. As a result, the union's delegation was not accepted. As Solidarity's press spokesman Karol Modzelewski put it: "Solidarity has been forced to consider the conduct of President Balicki as deliberate sabotage of decisions jointly approved by the government and the union leadership. The conduct cancels explicit government decisions made only one week ago, thus making the supreme organ of the executive look ridiculous." Only after the election of Jaruzelski as Poland's new prime minister did Balicki receive Solidarity's delegation. In a speech delivered to foreign correspondents of Comecon countries, Jozef Klasa, the Central Committee's chief of propaganda, admitted that bad relations persisted in many media — especially in the radio, where the technical personnel were members of Solidarity. In the same speech he added that Solidarity cannot have any influence in the press, radio and television. Discussions held on February 19 did not bring a full agreement any closer. It was agreed, however, that if information broadcast by radio or television was not authorized by Solidarity, it would be presented as such. Radio and television agreed to broadcast approximately eight one-hour discussions with Solidarity's representatives. Mid-April was fixed as a date for renegotiating the agreement.[10]

Today, Solidarity's access to the media remains precarious and it is still uncertain what form it will finally take. Authorities do not know how they can live with Solidarity — hence the periodical confrontations during which authorities instinctively reach for force and Solidarity threatens strikes. Communication channels between the government and Solidarity are *ad hoc* and mostly meant to prevent the crisis situation from deteriorating further. Regardless of how Solidarity's demand for greater access to the media was formulated, it was clearly political in character. Although no longer taken seriously by anyone in Poland, the costly facade of ideological dogmas could be further discredited, the party might lose its grip on social initiatives, and the state administration might lose its aura of secrecy.

The strikes have dealt a severe blow to the authorities. The Polish United Workers

10. Cf. *Osrodek Badan Spolecznych i Biuro Informacyjne NSZZ Solidarnosc Region Mazowsze* (*Center for Social Research and Information Bureau of NSZZ Solidarity*), n. 41 (February 20, 1981).

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Party (PZPR) is a workers' party in name only, and it is held responsible for the crisis by public opinion. The party was deeply divided, and this made direct attacks on the new unions more difficult. This is when the party opened its attacks on "anti-socialist forces." The attacks were intended to lay the blame for the crisis on a group of people whose outspokenness was embarrassing to authorities and to present their activities as dangerous. As Klasa put it, there was no room in the dialogue between the party and society for people "with whom it is impossible to talk." The alternatives were made clear to Solidarity's activists: for so long as the KOR committee of advisers[11] is involved in organizing the new independent trade unions, the authorities will not be willing to compromise on Solidarity's demands.[12] The authorities' aim was to create divisions between a "good" Soliarity and a "bad" one, depending on its relations to KOR.

KOR members act mostly as advisers — especially in bigger industrial or academic centers. In one industrial town (Walbrzych) a KOR collaborator was dismissed from the Solidarity presidium. With perhaps one exception (a Warsaw steel mill strike), KOR members in fact play a moderating role within Solidarity. On some occasions KOR members also take part in negotiations with the authorities. Their influence within Solidarity is fully recognized by those who feel it necessary to denounce either "anti-socialist" forces or even specific KOR members as enemies.

The propaganda campaign against the so-called anti-socialist forces was seen by union activists as an attack on Solidarity's apolitical character. It was the authorities' attempt to impose the official ideology and to influence the selection of personnel staffing union offices. Its aim was to intimidate union members and force Solidarity to make openly political declarations. This is further confirmed by a secret document made public by Solidarity Mazowsze region "Notes on Rules for Action Against Participants in Illegal Anti-Socialist Activities,"[13] where it is clear that authorities sought to link new unions with dissidents.[14] This document revealed the authorities' hypocritical attitude toward the unions. Prepared by the general prosecutor's office, the document was to be used by the district public prosecutors in attempts to prove that the growth of independent trade unions was a direct consequence of anti-socialist activities. Furthermore, the document recommends lawless acts such as the confiscation of uncensored independent publications during searches at private homes

11. The Polish initials "KOR" stand for Workers' Defense Committee, which later transformed itself into Social Self-Defense Committee KOR (KSS-KOR). It was set up September 23, 1976 to provide material, medical and legal help to workers maltreated and imprisoned for participation in food riots in Radom and Ursus. It has 35 members and about 200 collaborators. It groups people holding different social and political views but united in their belief that it is necessary to create and support independent social initiatives and institutions in order to promote and defend citizens' rights. Many important publications defying censorship originated thanks to KOR's initiatives.

12. In a statement of November 23, 1980, the National Consultative Commission in particular against the doctored Kuron TV interview where he was shown calling for the burning of the communist party's headquarters: "Solutions which are today being put forward in the nationwide discussion on the program of renewal, have over the last few years been voiced by people who are now being labeled anti-socialist forces by the propaganda machine."

13. Published in full in *The London Times*, November 27th, 1980.

14. The document was noticed missing from the General Prosecutor's office. This lead to a serach of the Mazowsze region Solidarity's headquarters in Warsaw. Jan Norozniak, a printer was arrested and charged under article 260 para. 1 of the penal code ("the disclosing of state secrets). The arrest has met with a strong protest by Solidarity in Gdansk and Warsaw and involved the independent trade unions in their first openly political confrontation with authorities, almost resulting in a general strike in Warsaw.

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to be used as material evidence to justify the arrest of members of the democratic opposition. The message was clear: uncensored, independent publishing activity is a preparation for the system's violent overthrow.

On February 8, 1981, it was announced in Warsaw that KOR was the subject of an investigation.[15] KOR and other unspecified "extreme elements" within Solidarity were also strongly criticized during the Central Committee plenary session. This gave rise to speculation in Warsaw that authorities were trying to drive a wedge not only between KOR and Solidarity, but also between Solidarity and the population at large by creating tense situations. This would provoke fresh outbreaks of strikes so that later Solidarity could be blamed for the state of the nation's economy and shortages.

The students of Krakow called the authorities' decision sick and crazy.[16] Eight people in all have been arrested since the signing of the Gdansk Agreement.[17] These arrests reveal the weaknesses of the agreement as to freedom of expression, legality of arrest, respect for the rule of law, and perhaps most important, the underlying hostility of the government to the implementation of these provisions.

Police and security services are sacrosanct in Poland and constitute a powerful pressure group inside the ruling party apparatus. At a time of industrial strife, when the morale of the party is shaken and there are changes in top leadership, the loyalty of the internal security apparatus is paramount. As the Bydgoszcz incident of March demonstrated, even very serious violations committed by the police are condoned by the authorities. The freedom of expression guaranteed under the Gdansk Agreement is not an inviolable right and is subject to other considerations such as Article 276 of the Penal Code against those who bypass censorship through clandestine publishing activities. Without Solidarity's access to the media, only the authorities can present their side and the proclaimed dialogue between the party and society becomes a threatening monologue.

In Poland censorship exists officially in the form of the Chief Office for Control of Press, Publications and Performances (GUKPPiW), and unofficially as a series of preventive measures. The latter is more difficult to define but its presence is obvious. The unofficial censor suppresses undesirable ideas at their source. The preventive censor acts as an arbitrary administrator of creative work in science and culture. This problem of preventive censorship is linked to the problem of access to the media. Without the democratization of the media, censorship will continue as a social phenomenon even if it is subjected to legal restrictions. As was shown by the GUKPPiW materials published in the "Black Book of Censorship of the Polish People's Republic,"[18] material banned from publication is hardly ever ideological and deals with data on such topics as environmental pollution, coffee consumption,

15. Actually, KOR has been investigated for the past three years under art. 276 para. 1 of the penal code (participation in an association whose purpose is to disseminate publications for which permission was not granted). On February 11, 1980, KOR claimed that it is not a crime to disseminate such publications. On the contrary, it enables a free flow of information and contributes to the development of the cultural life of the nation. The statement also draws attention to the fact that it is contrary to the penal code not to complete an investigation within three months.

16. The statement was made by the Coordinating Council of Independent Union of Students in Krakow (ZS) on February 11, 1981.

17. Seven of these political detainees are members of the Confederation of Independent Poland (KPN), a nationalist ground lead by a former journalist and historian Leszek Moczulski.

18. Published in the West by ANEKS (1977) and in Poland by NOWA. For a sample of this material, see "Excerpts from the 'Book of Directives and Recommendations'," in *Telos*, n. 38 (Winter, 1978-79), pp. 181-189.

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purchase of licenses abroad, mining disasters and countless other similar examples.[19]

A major function of censorship is to provide the party with considerable elbow room. Censorship ensures that the authorities' mistakes in planning, investment, social policy, etc., do not become public knowledge. In order to make their union more autonomous, Warsaw journalists took up the question of preventive censorship. In a six-hour session on September 11, 1980, they criticized restrictions on their work not only by institutionalized censorship, but also by the party apparatus and editors. A few weeks later, during a three-day extraordinary Congress in Warsaw (October 29-31, 1980), delegates of the Union of Polish Journalists (SDP) were strongly critical of the working and organizational conditions prevailing among mass media employees which led to an unprecedented decline of the profession's prestige. Statutes were amended to make journalists *feel* more like the authorities' partners rather than mere instruments of the propaganda machine.

The Warsaw meeting on February 13 between the newly elected SDP chairman, Stefan Bratkowski, and Stefan Olszowski, a key (hard-line) Politburo member, did not bridge the gulf of mistrust between the two sides. Bratkowski pointed out that the journalists' aim was not to wrest away from the party the management of the media, but to enable the media to fulfill its basic function. The old methods of controlling the media by the party deprived them of all credibility and without a press, radio and television that enjoy the public's trust it is impossible to rule the country. Journalists explicitly demanded the right to provide full information concerning public opinion. Olszowski replied that the leadership intended to carry out reforms calmly and gradually and did not want to be pushed by "irresponsible elements." According to Olszowski, the state of public opinion leaves much to be desired. Although truthful information is a necessary condition for renewal, information must not appear without a commentary, he said.[20]

Next to journalists, writers are the ones most engaged in day-to-day struggle with the censor. During a meeting of the party cell of the Warsaw Union of Writers on November 5, 1980, "an ideological statement" concerning the current crisis in the arts and culture was adopted. One of the resolutions called for a precise legal definition of the censor's rights and duties. Another demand was that the Ministry of Arts and Culture be given the right to exempt certain literary works from GUKPPiW censorship. The writers also condemned the "instrumental" treatment of culture and the relegation of non-conformist writers to a marginal existence. The Chief Council of the Union of Writers had for many years called for a change in official cultural policy which was destroying "creative freedom" and impoverishing "the country's cultural traditions."[21] They too demanded that censorship be legally limited and subjected to formal social control.

Public discussion concerning censorship was initiated by an article by Marian Falsinski in the lawyers' weekly, *Prawo i Zycie*, on October 5, 1980. According to Falsinski, the first condition to be met by the proposed law on censorship must be the right of society to full and accurate information. To meet this condition, some social control mechanisms must be established to counteract abuses. Falsinski proposed a set of procedures for appealing censors' decisions. The Gdansk Agreement required the government to present within three months a bill on censorship. This turned out to be

19. Cf. Piotr Cygan and Rubem C. Fernandez, "Secrets of Censorship in Poland," in *Telos*, n. 38 (Winter, 1978-79), pp. 175-180.

20. *Biulletin*, n. 3, from Solidarity's Press Agency (AS).

21. Cf. *Tygodnik Powszechny* (September 21, 1980).

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impossible. When the Ministry of Justice finally proposed some legislation, it immediately came under fire as failing to alter the existing situation in any significant way. The interests protected by the bill are so wide and the wording used to define them so vague that the government's power of censorship remained legally intact. One possible improvement in the government's proposed legislation was a right of appeal against a first decision by censors' office. Thus, according to the National Consultative Commission (KPP): "the project proposed by the Ministry of Justice does not increase the freedom of press and publications nor does it provide sufficient guarantees for the lawful functioning of censorship. Thus, it cannot be accepted as having met the conditions of the Gdansk Agreement."[22]

Of crucial importance to union members is whether censorship will be extended over the bulletins and information sheets published by Solidarity. The proposed government legislation does not provide for exemption of the bulletins but only of information sheets. The union maintained that bulletins cannot be put on the same footing as publications distributed through state-run networks of kiosks and reading rooms. Since September 1980, Solidarity's publications have not been subjected to censorship but no formal agreement has ever been reached and authorities have not officially exempted them from censorship. In some cases (Czestochowa, Walbrzych, Jelenia Gora), the government has explicitly forbidden such publications.[23]

Two national Solidarity newspapers, *Jednosc* (Unity) published in Szczecin, and *Solidarnosc* (Solidarity), soon to start publishing in Warsaw, had to accept censorship since both use state printing facilities. *Jednosc* is an independent journal and its links with Solidarity are not straightforward. The editors work closely with Solidarity's presidium but there is no formal, institutionalized link between the two, although *Jednosc* cannot be said to represent the official KKP's viewpoint or to be under its

22. Cf. *Zycie i Nowoczesnosc* (November 27, 1980). The government proposals also did not go far enough in changing other aspects of censorship. Accordingly, the censor was not obliged to state in writing the grounds for his decision. The period within which appeals against censors' decisions should be dealt with by the Central Administrative Court was not specified. The government proposal envisaged the GUKPPiW to continue its activities under the auspices of the Council of Ministers. Representatives of artistic, scientific and academic circles (STN) wanted GUKPPiW to be subordinated to parliament (Sejm) and a special parliamentary committee to monitor censorship. This would have ensured permanent public control over censorship. The legal grounds for appeals against GUKPPiW decisions to the administrative courts were also left unclear. It is also unclear whether the grounds for appeal must be based on the censor's formal violations of the law or whether each material withdrawn from publication is to be judged on its merits by the judge. In other words, will the judge be allowed to voice an opinion on the potential social harm of the material in question? Further differences of opinion emerged on such issues as confiscation of printed matter by customs officials, penalties, etc.

23. In a letter of March 1, 1981 addressed to deputy Prime Minister Mieczyslaw Rakowski, Solidarity's National Executive (KKP) protested against attempts at censorship of internal Solidarity's publications. The letter contains a reminder that, in accordance with the January 29 KKP's resolution, any attempt to prevent publication of union bulletins must be considered a reprisal preventing the normal working of union bodies. This in turn obliges Solidarity to call for strike action. In addition, the letter quotes the Suwalki Resional Public Prosecutor's decision to investigate a group of local school children who publish a newsletter *Lawa* (*The Bench*). The letter points out that to try children would turn both the state and the judiciary into a laughing-stock. It is clear that should the authorities attempt to extend censorship over Solidarity's publications, the effects of such an action would be both psychological (they would demonstrate the authorities' ill-will by clamping down on previously granted concessions) as well as organizational (they would hinder the flow of information inside Solidarity). For some time now the vast majority of Solidarity bulletins has been marked "for internal use" and this marking is used by Solidarity's negotiators as an argument supporting their demand that the authorities clearly committed themselves to exempting these publications from censorship.
See Solidarity's "Statute," para. 33, point 2.

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control. It is not clear, therefore, whether *Jednosc* will be an independent political journal taking advantage of the renewal of public life started by Solidarity or whether it will serve Solidarity's ends while outside its formal control.[24]

The much delayed publication of Solidarity's weekly *Solidarnosc* has given rise to great expectations. According to the agreement reached between Solidarity representatives and the government, *Solidarnosc* is to have a total run of half a million copies. The number of pages, originally set at 24, was later reduced to 16. Its editor-in chief, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, during the meeting held February 4, 1981, at the Warsaw Polytechnic, said that a completely new publication was required. It was to contribute to the formation of a consensus on the basis of different viewpoints. The main task of *Solidarnosc* would not be to provide information (already in regional bulletins) so much as it would be to initiate discussions on the issues confronting the union as a whole.[25] There is a question mark hanging over the future of numerous regional bulletins once Solidarity's weekly is published on a regular basis. Authorities may again try to limit them on the basis that, since Solidarity has its own national weekly, other publications are redundant.

In its negotiations with the authorities, Solidarity acquired one invaluable ally: the printers and the technical personnel employed in state-run publishing houses.[26] Since their national congress held in Szczecin January 31-February 1, 1981, they have come out with their own initiatives. In order to make censors' decisions public, they now use graphic marks (a square bracket with four full stops signifies a crossed-out passage) and oppose publishing information distorting an official Solidarity stand. Printers belonging to Solidarity declared February 13 as a "day without press" in support of two major demands of their union: access to the media and less censorship.[27] a day earlier a similar strike had taken place in Lower Silesia (Wroclow) to demand the release of a political prisoner.[28] The strike was originally planned by the public transport workers in Wroclaw. Since this would have involved too much hardship for the local population, the printers went on strike instead. Faced by these developments, censors modified some of their old practices. The task and the responsibility for censoring texts was transferred to editors-in-chief and editorial offices. In order to fool the printers, censors tell the editors to delete certain passages in the form of stylistic corrections or as needed to save space, so as to make it appear as though the changes were made by editors. Thus, some journalists holding non-conformist views began to find it more difficult to get their texts accepted.

24. *Jednosc* is edited by a small group of students and academics without wide professional journalistic printing or distribution experience which set the ambitious task of publishing 200,000 copies a week of an 8-12 page tabloid. (By comparison, *Polityka*, Poland's most popular political weekly has a total run of 450,000 copies.) The editorial team of 4 full-time staff members and 12 volunteers managed to obtain a go-ahead from the authorities in Warsaw, but it remains doubtful whether they will allow 200,000 copies of a wholly independent political trade union journal each week. The relation between *Jednosc* and the local censor's office is strained and censorship authorities in Warsaw have begun subjecting *Jednosc* to even more careful scrutiny than local censors. The third issue of *Jednosc* would not have come out at all had it not been for the printers who printed it despite objections in high places. A strike alert by the printers was declared on another occasion.

25. *Biulletin*, n. 3, from Solidarity's Press Agency (AS).

26. In the Mazowsze (Warsaw) region the commission on censorship after its first session issued its first communique which in point 7 pledges close cooperation with the printers belonging to Solidarity in order to make public the censors' actions contravening the Gdansk Agreements.

27. This strike did not take place because Solidarity's national leadership decided to respond favorably to the new Prime Minister's Wojciech Jaruzelski's call for a 90 day industrial truce.

28. Tadeusz Jandziszak, a member of Confederation of Independent Poland (KPN).

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It is difficult, if not impossible, for authorities to abandon their normal model of communication with society by means of censorship and by treating the media as a mere instrument of propaganda. Censorship is used not only to prevent criticism of party policies and its leaders, but also to create the impression that authorities are infallible and their policies enjoy mass support. To maintain such a myth in the present situation in Poland is impossible, not only among the general public, but even within the party. Both authorities and Solidarity are aware of the explosiveness of the issue of censorship. It is not an issue confined to disgruntled intellectuals: the demand to subject it to the provisions of the law was also made by Lodz students and Rzeszow farmers who in their manifesto objected to school manuals presenting a falsified view of the past.

In creating independent unions, workers wanted the authorities to implement the concessions they had won once the wave of strikes subsided. Loosening censorship and allowing whole sections of society, hietherto never consulted, to voice their opinions would be a step in creating a system of social communication enabling the public to monitor the authorities' goodwill and in turn provide them with an accurate picture of the public's reaction to their decisions. Authorities, however, did not expect to be in the spotlight of public opinion. They simply kept quiet about Solidarity's accusations that the provisions of the Gdansk Agreement were not being carried out. Instead, they raised the issue of Solidarity's political character as a potential opposition party — a haven for anti-socialist forces and a vehicle for counter-revolution. The media echoed the authorities' calls for moderation as though Solidarity was organizing strikes for their own sake. Despite pressure from the Soviet Union, East Germany and Czechoslovakia, it was not easy for the country's leadership to whittle away the concessions of the Gdansk Agreements, since the public saw in the very existence of Solidarity a guarantor that these agreements would be carried out.

Apart from the usual trade union concerns with pay, jobs and working conditions, Solidarity has to deal with matters not traditionally associated with unions. Solidarity has had to perform this role on top of its usual activities simply because in present-day Poland there is no other organization of equal strength and influence to take up such issues as censorship, violations of law by state security apparatuses, individual farmers rights, political prisoners, etc. The danger is that Solidarity will one day be confronted with a crisis of rising expectations. The union is not a panacea for everything and it cannot be expected to redress the balance between authorities and the general public. In present-day Poland, regional union publications have a major role to play. Whether they're printed on mimeo machines or run off on large presses, they reflect the pluralistic character of Solidarity. For as long as local union publications remain independent there is no danger that Solidarity will be taken over by opportunists. During the first national conference of union press (February 24-25, 1981), in the Katowice steel mill it was agreed that editors are responsible for the content of union bulletins and that they are not organs of the local executive. Apart from information, the main function of union publications is control of the union leaders' activities. Similar tasks may be put before Solidarity's national weekly. But local union bulletins can cope with this task much better simply because Solidarity's national weekly will represent only one view, whereas the local bulletins numbering several hundred will represent many different viewpoints. Since censorship will remain and Solidarity's access to the media will not be unconditional, the role of local union publications as *de facto* free from censorship is crucial in enabling rank-and-file Solidarity members to voice their opinions. It is this press that can be compared with the biblical David who delivered a mortal blow to the state-run Goliath of mass media.

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POLLS, POLLSTERS, PUBLIC OPINION AND POLITICAL POWER IN POLAND IN THE LATE 1970S

by Georges Mink*

Public opinion polls are very popular in Poland. The weekly *Polityka* used them September 4-5, 1980, a few days after the signing of the Gdansk Agreement. The posing of daring questions that go straight to the heart of Polish concerns and the choice of published responses confirm that there is an enormous need to know what people are really thinking.[1] Each new crisis reintroduces a technique of social inquiry that fosters the illusion of magical powers in a system where neither the problem of informing citizens and government nor that of ideologically mobilizing the whole population has been resolved. This illusion is not limited to Soviet bloc nations. In fact, the parallels between East and West in relation to this phenomenon are striking. The temptation to substitute an instrument that collects social facts for a dialogue between rulers and ruled and, more generally, for the institutions that are supposed to guarantee the state's democratic functioning has been denounced many times in Europe and the United States. This same parallel — although with a twist — appears again when we examine the neutrality of such a technique and particularly when the effects of publishing results of political opinion polls are questioned. The utilization of the image of public opinion to change the political behavior of social actors has recently been condemned in France.[2] Although in Poland the government requires polls, there is a considerable fear of making their results public.[3]

Thanks to sociologists and, particularly, journalists, attitude and opinion studies have a long and solid tradition in Poland, beginning with the reactivation of the sociology centers in 1956. Just before the 1956 crisis, journalists decided that in the future they would adapt their work to the population's needs. The very first analysis of the reading of the press at the Zeran auto factory, based on the results of polls taken in 1954 and 1955, was printed in 1956 with the stipulation that it was "for internal use" only. Paradoxically, however, more than 3,000 copies were printed.[4] Chance and imagination made up for the lack of methodological sophistication: before the editing of the results of the first poll, which showed the weak interest in the press among factory workers, the third Communist Party plenum granted more freedom of expression to the mass media. It was decided to do another poll on the same 200

*The author is a researcher at CNRS and a lecturer at the Université René Descartes in Paris. This paper was originally presented at the Second World Congress of Soviet and East European Studies (section on East European Mass Communication after Helsinki and Belgrade), which was held September 30 through October 4, 1980, in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, West Germany. A French version was scheduled to appear in the March 1980 edition of *Revue d'Etudes Comparatives Est-Ouest*. English translation by Greg Ostrander.

1. *Polityka*, September 13, 1980, p. 7.

2. On the real or supposed role of polls in the defeat of Chablan-Delmas by Giscard d'Estaing, see J.-L. Loubet Del Bayle, *Introduction aux Methodes des Sciences Sociales* (Paris, 1978), especially the section "Aspect Politique de la Publication des Resultats," p. 76.

3. The question concerning the ethical use of opinion polls has spread beyond France's borders. See the controversy on the "fixing" of opinion polls in *Le Monde* that ran between February and June 1980, as well asl the summary of the discussion on the theme "Fault-il Bueler les Sondages?" organized on February 13, 1980, by Channel 2 and published in *Le Monde*, February 15, 1980.

4. *Analiza Czytelnictiva i Kolportazu Prasy w Fabryce Samochodow Osobowych na Zeraniu* (Analysis of the Reading and Sale of the Press at the Automobile Factory at Zeran — Warsaw, 1956).

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persons in the original sample. For the first time a diachronic comparison was obtained which indicated the usefulness of repeated polls.

Then there was an avalanche of polls on the quality of information diffused by press and radio. In 1957 the Public Opinion Research Center (PORC) was created and, since 1958, it has carried out several dozen polls. It took advantage of a rare phenomenon in the history of Eastern European countries: the people questioned replied openly, even to those questions that invited political criticism. They were all persuaded that the limits hitherto imposed on popular participation had been lifted. This center not only had to meet the requests of its mother institution — the Polish Radio Television Committee — but it also had to deal with themes proposed by other social and political organs. Thus, it inaugurated a system of providing services that its successor, the Research Center on Public Opinion and the Studies of Programs (created in 1965) has continued up to the present.[5]

Lack of specialized personnel and of material means allegedly led to a decline in opinion polls. But, as Nowak argues, a misunderstanding of sociology's function — with preference given to propaganda, which degraded the quality of information — is responsible for the disfavor into which polls fell. There was censorship each time the results were controversial and contradicted the ideological line. The investigator was made suspect or, worse, his methods were forbidden by the state. The proliferation of polls, often methodologically poor, was an easy target for those bothered by the demystifying results. "Poll-omania" was initially denounced and this was used by political leaders to restrict pollsters' work.[6]

The usefulness of opinion polls was rediscovered following the December 1970 revolt. The new government came out in favor of popular consultation and acknowledgement of public opinion: "The government wishes to know precisely what disturbs society, what it discusses, what it expects, what it criticizes, and how it judges various governmental decisions."[7] A content analysis of official discourse or of the authorized positions taken by journalists during 1971 clarifies the reasons for this turn.

First of all, there was the question of concern for good government. It was often pointed out that there cannot be good government without accurate information about those governed. This was shown by referring to Gomulka's impasse several years before his dismissal. When a crisis of confidence develops between the rulers and the ruled, channels of information become clogged up, thus endangering the state. Even if very disciplined, the party ceases to function effectively because lack of information affects it as much as the rest of the population. The view that polls were necessary to figure out how to lessen social tensions gained ground.[8] As after the events of October

5. Many polls have been conducted — including some for the Communist Party's Central Committee. The apogee of the activity of the public opinion pollsters occurred at the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s. Cf. A. Sicinski, *Spoleczenstwo Polskie w Badaniach Ankietowych* (Polish Society as Reflected in Opinion Polls — Warsaw, 1966). For a description of the polls' results during this period, see A. Huszczo in the chapter, "Public Opinion in Poland," in W.D. Connor and Z.Y. Giteman, *Public Opinion in European Socialist Systems* (New York, 1977), pp. 41-83. Cf. also G. Mink, *L'Opinion Publique en URSS et dans les Democraties Populaires* (Documentation Francaises, 1975), pp. 34-37.

6. S. Nowak, "Spoliczna Przydatnosc Badan Postaw i Opinii" (The Social Utility of Research on Attitudes and Opinions), in *Nowe Drogi*, No. 9 (1971), p. 21.

7. J. Szelewicki, "Dziennikarz Nie Jest Kaprysna Primadonna" (The Journalist is not a Capricious Prima Donna), in *Polityka*, May 15, 1971, p. 5.

8. Gierek himself supported it during his February 7, 1971, speech to the eighth plenum of the Central Committee: "The important social problems will be resolved after listening to the opinion of the concerned social milieu." Cf. E. Gierek, "Program Rozwoju Socialistycznej Polski" (A Program for Development for Socialist Poland) in the brochure of the eighth plenum of the Central Committee (Warsaw, 1971), p. 43.

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1956, throughout this period, too, the fascination with the spectacular results obtained through the opinion polls did not have as a corollary the appearance of major works on public opinion and its adaptation to Marxism — as had been the case in the Soviet Union.[9] On the contrary, in Poland it was as if public opinion was self-explanatory.

Since public opinion pollsters were almost all sociologists,[10] it is important to take into consideration what influences sociologists' behavior in shaping the relation between state and public opinion. The post-war evolution of sociology must be seen as an attempt by sociologists to professionalize their work. This is known by the increasing autonomous function of sociology and efforts to develop objective methodological tools. The following phases characterize the development of Polish sociology:

(1) There was an evolution of the government's need for social information because of the failure of traditional channels of information and of Soviet-type social control mechanisms (organization by the party and mass organs).

(2) There was a progressive weakening of the guardians of dogma *vis-à-vis* pragmatists even within the corporation. This weakening was the result of two factors: (a) The hiatus between theory and the knowledge of concrete facts frustrated sociologists and forced them to operationalize theory by means of prudent recourse (to avoid displeasing the guardians of dogma) to foreign concepts. (b) Professional pressures became the moral judge of the sociologists' activities. The Polish Sociological Association has approximately 1,000 members and only a minority of its leadership belongs to the party (rare for professional unions in Poland). But the corporation is even larger since it includes dozens of faculties and numerous research teams. In an effort to set the pace for Eastern European sociology, Polish sociologists increased contacts with international sociology. Furthermore, with the re-establishment of the teaching of sociology, students became a kind of court determining the popularity rating of their professors, judged according to performance.[11]

(3) There were non-Marxists in Polish sociology. By reviving the traditions of pre-war sociology, since 1956 several sociologists have developed theoretical and empirical perspectives independent of the predominant Marxist sociology (e.g., Malewski, Ossowski, Chalasinski, etc.). This resulted in a professional pluralism encouraging free expression in a domain that the state would have preferred to control.

Stefan Nowak, the most "professional" of Polish sociologists, has played a crucial role in the promotion of polls. His authority is due to his determination to arm Polish sociology with a rigorous methodological apparatus. Politically neutral, he placed the weight of his authority in the 1971 battle for the recognition of the status and usefulness of opinion polls. Exploiting skillfully the trauma provoked by recent riots, Nowak used the monthly organ of the party's Central Committee to promote his

9. A.K. Uledov, *Obscestvennoe Mnenie Sovetskogo Obscestva* (Public Opinion in Soviet Society — Moscow, 1963), attempted to reconcile the empirical findings — opinion is heterogeneous — and the ideological imperative — there is an identity between the will of the party, that of the collectivity and that of the individual. Cf. B.A. Grusin, "Mnemie o Mire i Mir Mnenij" (Opinion of the World and the World of Opinion — Moscow, 1967).

10. For more information on the activities of Polish sociologists see the quarterly *Kronika Naukowa* (Scientific Chronicle), published by the Academy of Science in Warsaw.

11. In this respect the trajectories of several party members and sometimes of high political leaders is enlightening. These sociologists' conduct is also exposed to the political pressure of their professional milieu, creating a conflict between political loyalty and the fear of being excommunicated for violating existing ethical norms. Thus, when the so-called "captains of Marxism-Leninism" came to sociology through party schools, their sociological work was systematically discredited.

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ideas.[12] In searching for a new social compromise, the liberal party members agreed with Nowak.[13]

There is, however, considerable divergence between sociologists and the journalists of the party press. Whereas the former carefully avoid discussion concerning the means of shaping public opinion, the latter, although opposed to attempts to manipulate it, acknowledge the need to shape it. In 1971, however, this issue became secondary. Suffering from a loss of popularity, party officials wished to discover this great unknown: "to reckon with public opinion means to have real knowledge of the state of social consciousness."[14] And sociologists were there, with their illusions concerning the system's reformability and moderation, to help the apparatus understand the crisis and involuntarily, to provide moral legitimacy to reform attempts.

In the ensuing dialogue with apparatchiks, sociologists proposed a list of objectives to grasp public opinion. The careful study of public opinion provides an analysis of the "diversity of social needs." Social planners will also become aware of the "hierarchy of human needs" and the intensity of frustration which results when they are not satisfied. By utilizing the same language of the plan and of efficiency, the sociologists and apparatchiks ought to understand each other.

Among those human needs there are those Nowak calls "neuralgic needs." The dramatization of the term is not accidental because it covers the causes of recent social conflicts. They are central needs. Their satisfaction is incomparably more important than whatever costs are involved, since failure to satisfy them leads to violent conflicts. Opinion polls also furnish information concerning future behavior. Finally, by way of more sophisticated polls, it is possible to obtain an indication of the way different social groups perceive the established system as a whole.[15]

Between 1970 and 1975, Poland enjoyed a phase of economic growth resulting in average wages rising by some 40 percent. This was done through the importation of Western technology, thus launching the famous development on credit, so harshly criticized today. For many citizens, however, it provided an opportunity to travel, even to countries outside of the socialist bloc.[16] Important administrative reforms gave the impression that the new leaders wished to break with the stagnation of the past. Thus, during this period, there was frequent recourse to experts and professionals. At that time, the Commission for the Modernization of the State and the Economy was formed. Composed of almost 200 political leaders, scientists, economists and

12. Thus, he warned the leaders: "Difficulties and conflicts, expelled from the sociological literature, do not therefore disappear from social reality. Rather, because of their 'clandestine' character, they increase in intensity." Cf. Nowak, *op.cit.*, p. 2.

13. In a shocking article in *Polityka*, before offering certain suggestions on how to prevent a break between the population and the state apparatus, Radgowski described the process of the alienation of public opinion: "To the extent that one does not sufficiently take into account the fact that public opinion is an ensemble of diverse opinions which may express themselves in the press, in discussions, and can have an effect on decisions taken democratically within political bodies, one forces it to function secretly in private meetings and in the corridors of power instead of within public debating rooms, as it should. In addition, if one takes into consideration the fact that there is only a limited access to information, then its proferred sources become speculation, gossip, magic and prediction.... This opinion is changing its orientation and becoming more aggressive toward decision-making centers which are seen as not wishing to 'hear the voice of the little man!' " Cf. M. Radgowski, "Co to Znaczy Liczyc Sie z Opinia Publiczna?" (What does it Mean to Deal with Public Opinion?) in *Polityka*, December 4, 1971, p. 3.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

15. Nowak, *op.cit.*, p. 78.

16. For this period, see A. Bronke and J.W. Strong, ed., *Gierek's Poland* (New York, 1973), and G. Mink, ed., *La Pologne de Gierek*, PPS, No. 290 (Documentation Francaise, 1976).

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administrators, it put together the triple administrative reform. During the historic debate that followed the signing of the Gdansk Agreement, Karol Malcuzynski characterized the triumphant attitude of the mass media then as a "propaganda of success."[17]

But enthusiasm for opinion studies collapsed quickly. On February 27, 1974, the third Polish public opinion research center was formed. Nowak's message had certainly been heard, but also completely subverted. The party's Central Committee endowed itself with an Institute for Fundamental Problems of Marxism-Leninism headed by the notorious hack, A. Werblan, editor of *Nowe Drogi*. Nowak's teachings had been assimilated in a peculiar fashion: the Center for the Study of Public Opinion, attached to the Institute, conducted vast polls among workers whose slightest ideological vacillation had to be immediately recorded and reported to the Central Committee. A sample of 164 representative industrial enterprises was constantly tested.[18] With each new administrative decision to raise norms or prices, carefully chosen researchers provided the state with analyses that were kept secret. The perverse effects of a suppressed public opinion, denounced by Radgowski, surfaced again. Two other institutions, however, systematically polled public opinion: the OBOP-ISP (Osrodek Badania Opini Publicznej i Studiow Programowych, i.e., the Research Center on Public Opinion and Program Studies) and the OBP (Osrodek Badan Prasoznawezch, i.e., the Research Center on the Press).[19]

The most well-known polls have been taken on the following subjects: the war and the occupation in the memories of Poles; the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with West Germany; the values and ideals of youth today; the attitude toward administrative reform; opinions on the year 2000; the problem of wasted time; the reading of the daily press; opinions on the choices for the future evolution of agriculture; attitudes toward physical and manual labor; the appraisal of the period 1971-75.

This list, far from complete, indicates that Polish public opinion is consulted about all reforms. Lack of published results, especially since 1976, prevents an exhaustive description of Polish public opinion. Many polls, however, were taken before, during and after the visit to Poland of Pope John Paul II and regular polls are taken within the Polish army. These examples show the leaders' high opinions of the instrumental value of public opinion research.

17. K. Malcuzynski, in *Zycie Warszawy*, September 8, 1980, p. 5.

18. M. Jarosinska and J. Kulpinska write that the criterion for the choice of this sample was the political and class nature of the enterprises: those chosen were sections of the working class with important influence and, at the same time, were located in important strategic points of the economy. Cf. *Ksztalt Struktury Spolecznej* (Forms of Social Structure — Ossolineum, 1978), pp. 162-163.

19. The first, in Warsaw, in addition to over a hundred public opinion studies per year, also carries out more specialized research on the evolution of audiences of Polish radio and television. The second, in Krakow, deals with the influence of the press on public opinion. Both centers publish research reports for restricted distribution. However, since 1975, the OBOP-ISP has had a quarterly journal *Przekazy i Opinie* (Media and Opinions) while the OBP publishes *Zeszty Prasoznawcze* (Studies on the Press). The two publications have a circulation of around 1,200 copies per issue. The OBOP-ISP, comparable by the nature of its work to the largest international polling organizations, works for several sponsors, including the party's Central Committee, the central state administration and the Academy of Science. On the occasion of an interview with its previous director, Lukasz Szymanski, whose replacement coincided with the end of the policy of wide publication of the polls' results, *Polityka* has defined it as the Polish Gallup. Cf. "Polski Gallup" (The Polish Gallup), interview with the director of the OBOP-ISP, in *Polityka*, February 21, 1978, pp. 1, 14.

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Since the June 1976 events, information concerning polling institutes has become scarce. This does not mean that their activities have ended but rather that jurisdiction over them has shifted. Polls taken by the OBOP-ISP and the OBP have become increasingly similar to those taken by the Study Center on Opinion of the Institute for the Fundamental Problems of Marxism-Leninism under the party's Central Committee. Studies are still carried out, but they are accompanied by strict instructions to prevent the diffusion of results.[20] Certain signs are unmistakeable: entire issues of OBOP-ISP's official organ, *Przekazy i Opinie*, are devoted to translations of foreign texts. Summaries of polls are rare but studies on socialist propaganda techniques, on mass communication models and on socialist consciousness are increasing.

Despite the absence of information on polls' results, based on few authorized accounts (usually published in the party's theoretical monthly, *Nowe Drogi*), in the late 1970s one could notice a gap opening up between official propaganda and the viewpoint of those polled. Socio-political opinions are warning signals as to the depth of the crisis that corrodes Polish society. One thing is clear: propaganda and the mass media have only a tenuous hold on Polish public opinion.

Despite lack of published results, opinion polls reveal that there is a parallel public opinion counter to the official version. Polls probably provide only a partial account of this. A sociologist, K. Slomczynski, asked his friends to respond to an official questionnaire of the Institute of Sociology. Some time later, in private, he questioned the same people again on the same subjects. The results of the two polls diverged considerably.[21]

Thus, a poll taken under the aegis of the Institute for the Fundamental Problems of Marxism-Leninism in 1977, on a random sample of 8,909 graduates, shows that Polish students do not see any contradiction between science and religion. To explain this, the commentator found recourse to the concept of a double truth, whereby he indicated that the science taught in the schools occupied a different compartment of the brain than the one occupied by early religious training. Beyond indicating the real doubling of the youths' values, this explanation also seeks to justify their religious inclinations, which are so distant from official ideology.[22]

These same graduates show their sensitivity to the lack of sincerity. The distance between words and actions disturbs them and they consider political leaders and teachers responsible. Already, in an OBOP-ISP poll taken in 1973, on a sample of young people from 16 to 20 years old (n equals 1,951), 53 percent believed that people very frequently say one thing during a meeting while thinking something else in private. If one adds to this the 28 percent who thought that this happened quite often, then it turns out that the great majority of youth condemn the doubling of attitudes and opinions in their own society.[23] The problem of "truth" as a central social problem appears in all investigations. Thus, Z. Sufin asked a representative sample of

20. The censors' report (*Informacja cenzorskia,* No. 15), of which 63 copies were printed on April 14, 1976, in London in a collection of texts titled *Czarna Ksiega Cenzury PRL* (The Black Book of the Polish Censor) testifies to this state of mind (pp. 224-231, Vol. I). For a selection of these texts, see "Excerpts from the 'Book of Directives and Recommendations' " in *Telos*, 38 (Winter 1978-79), pp. 181-189.

21. Cf. M. Wesolowska, "Wlasne zdanie" (To Have one's own Viewpoint), *Polityka*, April 22, 1978, p. 7.

22. Z. Kawecki, "Postawy Maturzystow w Swietle Badan" (The Attitudes of Graduates as Revealed in Opinion Polls), in *Nowe Drogi*, No. 8 (1980), p. 94.

23. K. Kicinski and J. Kurczewski, "Wartosci Uznavane Przez Mlodziez" (Values of the Young), in *Przekazy i Opinie*, No. 1 (1976), p. 29.

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the Polish population to evaluate the quality of information concerning economic questions. In 1977, around 70 percent of the respondents thought they were objectively informed. But there has been a decline in this belief, since in 1975, the figure was 82 percent.[24]

A rare poll of a non-representative sample, composed of a hundred intellectuals and thus opinion leaders, was organized independently of official institutions. A very detailed content analysis of its results was published 13 months before the Gdansk strike. The group, composed of party and non-party members, adopted the name "Experience and Future." Seeing itself as the system's reformer, through the declarations of its members, this group also drew attention to the problem of "truth" and "credibility." It described the existing information system in Poland and indirectly explains why truth wilts away: "The party employs the means of mass communication as an instrument to safeguard power by means of three levers: first, its directives and recommendations concerning the direction of propaganda; secondly, decisions concerning policy; and third, censorship. Over the last few years, influence of the administrative and economic apparatus has grown with regard to directives and censorship. The manipulation of the mass media has been facilitated by the corruption of the journalistic milieu by functionaries of the administration and of the economic apparatus. All this has progressively deprived most of the mass media of its ability to persuade; widespread sentiment as to their lack of credibility, especially concerning political matters, has caused doubt even with respect to true messages. Also those who control the mass media in Poland act as if their information monopoly were total. Now, the means of foreign communication and the development of publications beyond the scope of the censor renders obsolete this illusory monopoly."[25]

Polls taken during the unfolding of the crisis have at least had the merit of showing the extent to which the party and the state were suffering from the apathy of its members and sympathizers. Two polls based on a comparable sample were taken at different times. The first was taken in 1975, the second in 1978. The sample consisted of 2,023 inhabitants of towns and villages, 864 municipal councillors, 201 presidents of national councils and 204 leaders of *gmina* (communes). The results of the comparison are enlightening. The percentages of people who were politically and socially active declined. The decline, however, is greater with regard to social than to political activity.[26]

The significance of the data gathered by the Polish polls permits another observation corroborated by many statements which began to appear increasingly during late 1979 and 1980. To the appearance of a "parallel" public opinion corresponds the renaissance of a parallel social life embodied in a number of important social institutions such as the family, small groups of friends or small communities. The socio-cultural activities offered by the Catholic church and the flowering of independent associations form its foundation. This phenomenon emphasizes the isolation of the institutional network of the party and the state.[27]

24. This study was carried out under the auspices of the Institute for the Fundamental Problems of Marxism-Leninism. Cf. Wesolowska, *op.cit.*, p. 7.

25. "Doswiadczenie i Przyzlosc. Raport o Stanie Rzeczypospolitej i Drogach Wiodacych do Jej Naprawy" (Experience and Future: Report on the State of the Republic and the Road to its Restoration) in *Nowa* (Warsaw, 1979), p. 11.

26. K. Ostrowski and Z. Sufin, "Aktywnosc Spoleczna w Swietle Badan" (Social Activity in Light of Opinion Polls), in *Nowe Drogi*, No. 11 (1979).

27. K. Kicinski and J. Kurczewski, *op.cit.*, p. 21. The sociologists of the Advanced School of Social Science (WSNS) under the party's Central Committee, have established the following

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To summarize, one may present a succinct picture of Polish public opinion as it appears at the end of the 1970s based upon the polls' results. For Poles today what is important is the nation, its history and its actual situation. The nation appears as a federation of families. Everything located between the family and the nation — especially the institutional network (political organizations, official unions, the state apparatus) — engenders no feeling of identification. Whoever would one day fill this void and install a society that is not opposed to the state will have to be concerned with a long re-education of public opinion. But to do this, it will be necessary to have the most complete democracy in all forms of social communication. Opinions will then clash with no risk except that of being incorrect.

hierarchy of formative areas according to their significance for the formation of public opinion: the most important by far is the family, followed by books, the press, and personal experience. Social organizations occupy the fourth spot and the work milieu is fifth. Only one half of those questioned grant to the party the moral right to form public opinion. Cf. *Glos Pomorza*, January 15-16, 1977, p. 5.

INTERVIEW WITH ANDRAS HEGEDÜS*

Q: In 1956 you were Prime Minister of the Hungarian communist government which triggered the popular uprising — and you were considered a Stalinist at that time. Today you are one of the leading Hungarian dissidents. Is your change attributable to insight, to the world situation, or simply to spite?

Hegedüs: This change did not take place overnight. It was a long process lasting from the 1956 October Revolution into the 1960s. I did a lot of thinking.

Q: Your untypical second career began in 1956 with your flight from Budapest. Why to Moscow?

Hegedüs: I judged the situation from the stupid vantagepoint of a person in power. I was convinced that the revolt was a counter-revolution which has to be suppressed in the interests of the party. Only in Moscow did I begin to have doubts.

Q: Why?

Hegedüs: I began an intensive study of Western sociology.

Q: In Moscow, where in the mid-50s there was absolutely no sociology?

Hegedüs: ...there was none and none was permitted. The Kremlin condemned sociology as a "bourgeois science." Nonetheless, the library of the Academy of Sciences had the most important sociology books — for example, Max Weber's. I read them avidly. I wanted to use sociology to discover the causes of the revolution.

*Andras Hegedüs, as Hungarian Prime Minister, in October 1956 called on the Soviet Union to intervene against his rebellious countrymen. On October 28 of the same year, he fled to Moscow in a Russian plane. There he studied philosophy and Western sociology, especially Weber, at the Academy of Sciences. Returning to Hungary in September 1958, in the following years as a sociologist and later as editor-in-chief of the journal *Valosag*, supported social reforms and a democratic development of Hungary. Because of his public criticism of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia he was reprimanded by the party in 1968, and he was finally expelled in 1973 because of "revisionism." This interview was done shortly before the Polish strike in the summer of 1980, and was originally published in *Der Spiegel*, August 25, 1980. Translated by David J. Parent.

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Q: And did you discover them?
Hegedüs: I at least understood that what was happening in Hungary was not a counter-revolution; that the rebels were not necessarily to be regarded as enemies of socialism; that there were among the rebels many workers and communists who had good reason to be dissatisfied. Also my own mistakes as Prime Minister became clear to me.
Q: Do you mean by this that if the Hungarian Prime Minister at the time had not been Hegedüs, possibly no revolution would have taken place?
Hegedüs: That would be too simple, for not only the Prime Minister was bad, the entire Stalinist regime was bad. In July 1956 radical political changes should have been made in restructuring the party and the government — instead of Rakosi not Ernö Gerö, but Janos Kadar should have become head of the party, instead of me, Imre Nagy should have been Prime Minister. Kadar represented the critical wing of the party, and Nagy was the figurehead of the intellectual opposition outside the party. With these two men at the head of party and government the revolution could have been avoidable. At any rate, thanks to Kadar, I found the political situation somewhat stabilized when I returned from Moscow to Budapest in 1958....
Q: Where you decided from then on to stick to sociology rather than politics.
Hegedüs: Not immediately. In 1961 I was already Vice-President of the Bureau of Statistics. In Eastern Europe that kind of position is highly political. Kadar wanted to make me president and to take me back into the government.
Q: You did not want that?
Hegedüs: I told him: No, thank you. I'd rather do scientific work. Let me head a sociological research group. Kadar was very disappointed at the time. He did not understand me. He thought I was too cowardly to bear political responsibility with him.
Q: Soon after Kadar was not only disappointed but angry. The entire Sociological Institute, of which you became Director, rapidly steered a course critical of the party. As early as 1964 you had your first difficulties as editor-in-chief of the critical sociology journal Valosag. *Then, in August 1968 you — as the only one of 200 intellectuals — protested at the Party Congress against the Warsaw Pact states' invasion of Czechoslovakia. What led you to do that?*
Hegedüs: A few things were going on then. I myself was studying primarily the problem of the social controls of bureaucracy. I began to suspect all leftist-oriented movements, whether Trotskyists or supporters of the Chinese cultural revolution. What good does it do, I asked myself, to smash the bureaucracy of the moment by a revolution — a cultural revolution? No good, none at all. Right away, a new bureaucracy develops, and it is surely even worse than the old one.
Q: Despite all differences, you were still a party member. You were, according to our information, expelled from the party only in 1973.
Hegedüs: That's right.
Q: ...After a lecture you gave in Warsaw. There you stated that socialism exists in Eastern Europe only in name. The Budapest Communist Party leadership then accused you of revisionism — of ideological deviation.
Hegedüs: What I said was a little more complicated. I and my colleague Maria Markus criticized in Warsaw the two forms of really existing socialism, i.e., both the East European system of state administration on the Soviet model and the Yugoslavian system of self-management, because both are, in different ways, bureaucratic. We sought a third possibility — a new alternative for a democratic development of socialism.

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Q: You have still not given up this dream of a more democratic, more humane communism down to this day. What, then, does the Hegedüs brand of a third model of communism look like?

Hegedüs: It looks a lot different today than it did originally. At first, I believed that the initiative for democratic development had to come from above — i.e., from the party leadership. Now, I no longer believe this. Now, I am convinced that the decisive impulse for this must come from below.

Q: How can this happen in a totalitarian system?

Hegedüs: By having society form autonomous organizations, independent of the party, which are not only tolerated by the communist party, but legalized. They should create a public opinion which contributes to a modernization of the power-structure and leads to a gradual dissolution of bureaucratic formations, which today are crippling economic and political life.

Q: You mean interest groups that grow into parties, form an opposition, and finally strive to take over power?

Hegedüs: No, I do not mean it that way. I do not want to introduce bourgeois democracy or multiple-party systems into Eastern Europe. You see, for Western Europe I approve with all my heart the so-called Eurocommunist way of a multiple party system and parliament. The East European one-party system would be a terrible thing in Western Europe. But the idea of introducing the Western European multiple-party system into Eastern Europe seems to me just as invalid. The established communist power would never be willing to voluntarily abdicate its rule to the opposition as soon as the opposition demonstrably had the majority behind it. That ends only in a catastrophe. And I am decidedly against catastrophes.

Q: What do you mean by "catastrophe"? The notorious counterrevolution?

Hegedüs: Civil war, especially civil war. It could then unleash a war of all nationalists within Eastern Europe. The Croatians are not the only dissatisfied ones.

Q: Getting back to our starting point — what you want are autonomous organizations independent of the party but which should not develop into separate parties?

Hegedüs: That's precisely it. I do not want pluralism of parties, but pluralism within the movement.

Q: That reminds one of the environmentalists [die Grünen] in the Federal Republic who likewise want to be a party but at the same time are very much afraid of becoming one.

Hegedüs: For us in Eastern Europe the arguments go quite differently. For us, it would be a dangerous thing to strive for power. For a member of the East European apparatus, loss of power means a plunge into oblivion — all privileges are gone, the nice apartment is gone, the official car, the secretary. So he concentrates on keeping power. Whoever wants to dethrone him, risks a brutal counterattack.

Q: Then, where are the autonomous organizations from which you hope a democratization of the regime will come?

Hegedüs: They are in part already present. It is false to assume, as it is often the case in the West, that in the East discussions are going on only in marginal groups. Our societies are by no means dead. Conflicts even involving the masses constantly arise. At factory meetings, for instance, workers defend their interests as forcibly as managers do theirs. And since there is no right to strike, there is simply a migration of labor.

Q: The West is not quite as badly informed about the East as you assume. No one here considers Eastern societies immobile. We know that the Czech underground press

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Edice Petlice *publishes far more interesting things than all official presses together. And we also know that in Hungary there is a relatively large tolerated cultural opposition which operates literarily, philosophically, and sociologically.*

Hegedüs: That is just the point I was leading to: there is, in present-day Eastern Europe an abundance of tolerated semi-oppositional groups. The party is not even unhappy about that — anyway it needs certain escape valves for the people's displeasure. But it is, as I said, a merely tolerated opposition. It has to finally be legalized and institutionalized. It has to finally be able to assume that toleration today will not turn into persecution tomorrow or the day after.

Q: If we have understood you correctly, you are asking the communist governments of Eastern Europe not only to tolerate a certain pluralism in society, but to officially legalize and encourage it.

Hegedüs: That is precisely what I am asking for. My thesis is this: The Eastern European power structure, on the one hand, and the East European opposition, on the other, stand before a great historical compromise. Those in power must desist from wanting to immediately integrate every movement, as before. They must, first, legally permit autonomous organizations. At the same time the opposition must limit itself. It must from the start renounce the traditional goals of politics — the achievement of power — indeed, even the moral questioning of current power. Moreover, it must also renounce the long-term goal of forming a political party of its own and be satisfied with controlling the various institutions of the power structure.

Q: Theoretically, such a thing is even hard to imagine. But in practice an abundance of almost unsolvable problems arise. The most important one is: what reason do those in power have to enter a historical compromise of that kind? Do they need it at all?

Hegedüs: They need it very much. I venture to say that they have no other choice. For, if they do not make the historical compromise, they are left only with two sad possibilities: either a neo-Stalinism, which no one wants, or an ever more frequent sequence of social upheavals until the system collapses completely.

Q: But why should the opposition be willing to accept the required self-restriction? An opposition which openly renounces taking power at the first opportunity is inefficient from the start. It can talk about everything, but change nothing.

Hegedüs: Nonetheless I see no other rational and feasible way to get out of dictatorship. It is really no slight accomplishment if the communist parties, now ruling absolutely, first accept the right of an opposition outside the party to exist. They thereby give citizens a right to their own opinion. That is a gigantic step forward. It creates a pressure of public opinion.

Q: And how is the upward pressure from below supposed to work? Can you name a concrete example?

Hegedüs: When I speak of autonomous organizations, I am thinking less of marginal groups than primarily of large social groups such as workers, farmers, intellectuals. Yet, I can illustrate for you how even the smallest autonomous organizations can work. Take the few critical sociologists in Hungary. They kept harping on three tabooed topics until the official side — the press, the film industry — no longer were able to ignore them. The first tabooed topic was that of the "second economy"....

Q: You mean the problem of private secondary economies, which are often more important for workers and for market-supply than the state-controlled economy.

Hegedüs: Yes. Secondly, there was the taboo of discrimination against the Gypsies, which we likewise made a topic of general discussion. Ten years ago it would have been completely unthinkable for a journal to criticize a Budapest bus-driver for calling out:

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"Ladies and gentlemen, Gypsies are in the bus. Watch out for your wallets." It was simply not permitted to write about racial discrimination in our good socialist society. Today, it is discussed and written about, movies are produced on the subject. The third taboo, finally, which sociologists addressed themselves to, has to do with poverty. Their aim — already partially attained — is to make the public aware that poverty does not exist only under bad capitalism. We also have it. For a critical opposition can react more quickly to social problems than the government can.

Q: Do you regard sociology, i.e., also your present work, as a kind of testing ground for the way autonomous organizations work?

Hegedüs: Yes. But, of course, I am in a privileged, relatively independent situation, having already retired. My young students, who are still in an employment relation, are incomparably worse off in this. Their livelihood is still dependent on the party's good will. So, for example, Zoltan Zsille lost his teaching position at the manager-training institute, because he refused to sign a statement condemning my views. That was in 1974. He has been unemployed ever since.

Q: Let us sum it up again. What you understand as the "historical compromise in the East" and what you elsewhere have called "radical reform" starts with the assumption that real socialism as we currently experience it in Eastern Europe, both in principle and in method, needs a thorough reform and also feels this to be so. Are we interpreting you right?

Hegedüs: The reform must be a comprehensive one. It is not just a matter of economic reforms recognized as necessary, but of social reforms. The precondition, in any case, is the legitimation of a divergent opinion.

Q: Loosely, according to the motto: "Let a hundred flowers bloom." You obviously hope that a more rational policy can be gained by broader public information and stronger communication between base and summit, between citizen and state power.

Hegedüs: I assume that, in reality, it is impossible to have a harmonious socialist society. It exists, at most, in the books of the communist party. Where different social interests can be expressed, there will be constant struggle. But I also assume that the various autonomous organizations will not be anti-socialist. They will be socialist, ecclesiastical, unionist, also apolitical, but not anti-socialist.

Q: The Prague Spring of 1968 proved rather the opposite. But let us assume, contrary to all experience, that the autonomous organizations could be guided in the far future by inalienable socialist values. Would it not be more sensible to modernize socialism from within, in the communist party?

Hegedüs: That sounds very logical at first. The party, as you know, also likes to argue that an opposition from the outside is superfluous because there is an internal opposition anyway. And there even really is....

Q: As a marginal group in the party without real influence....

Hegedüs: I do not regard the power-structure as a homogeneous stratum. I know a number of progressive elements in this power-structure, but they are impotent without outside pressure. They can assert themselves against the party's orthodox and dogmatic elements only if independent oppositionists help them. So I insist: it is impossible without autonomous groups.

Q: And you seriously believe that the rulers in Eastern Europe would be ready to go along with this risky democratization model? And you cannot lure the populace out of its inactivity with improved ideology and social reform. Whoever rejects socialism, no matter for what reasons, draws back to private life and wants to be left in peace.

Hegedüs: But precisely this flight to private life shows how sick the socialist system is. In our country, we have only two alternatives for public activity. To work for power,

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or, if one is willing to risk severe repressions, critically to advocate reforms. Whoever wants neither the one nor the other — and, understandably, that is most people — can only withdraw to private life. They will become committed only when they know that they really can change something.

Q: For the moment that is nothing more than a hope. Moreover, the dissidents in Prague, Warsaw and Budapest have already burned their fingers. Their mistrust of government promises is deep and, as we know, not unfounded. Who guarantees you, then, that the state power will observe the historical compromise in the long run, especially in crisis situations? That the person who speaks up today in good faith will not be condemned as an enemy of the state tomorrow?

Hegedüs: Given the present situation, no one could guarantee this. None of us knows what will happen. But after the institutionalization of independent movements I am calling for, the individual will be protected to some extent. The government's hands are then tied. If it persecutes a critic of the system, that would invalidate the whole system.

Q: And who guarantees to the government that the autonomous groups will observe the rules of self-restriction, i.e., never want to seize power?

Hegedüs: Only the government itself can guarantee that. It must act in such a way that the wish for its replacement does not arise anywhere among the people.

Q: What political position do you see for yourself in such a reformed communism of the future?

Hegedüs: None. I died as a politician, as I now see it, in October 1956. My present role is that of a social critic. I want to retain freedom of thought.

Q: As an example for others?

Hegedüs: I want to act in such a way that I also give others the courage to think. For, you see, among us in Eastern Europe, a terrible disease is spreading: even those intellectuals who are not really threatened, also give up thinking. They have become too used to the idea that certain questions must not be asked.

Q: Can you imagine a social development in which you would again want to become at least a member of the party?

Hegedüs: No. That is entirely out of the question. After my experience in life, I could never again be a member of the communist party. I never again want to subject my own thinking to the party's thinking-methods.

HUNGARY IN AUTUMN 1980
by Peter Engelmann*

The passports have been stamped, the books and magazines leafed through. Apparently the magazine *Stern* does not endanger the socialist order and is allowed to cross the Hungarian border with me. It is not obvious from the cover that this issue contains a detailed article on the Polish strikes. And the train inspectors are not really that interested anyway. After an hour's wait at the border, the train continues on. I am in Hungary. In less than three hours I will be in Budapest.

*Peter Engelmann is originally from East Germany and now lives in Paris. He also teaches philosophy at the University of Bremen. English translation by Barton Byg.

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Strikes by Polish shipyard workers, strikes spreading throughout Poland, and a green light for the founding of independent labor unions — I have come to see these events as signs of change in the socialist camp. Western commentators and Hungarian functionaries, however, maintain in perfect unison that Hungary has nothing in common with Poland. There is no shortage of meat, and the labor unions are indeed truly representative of blue- and white-collar workers. Naturally, this was also claimed by the Polish unions, and long after the first day of the strikes. What is the real situation in Hungary? And what is going on beneath the surface?

There Is No Shortage of Meat. In Budapest, which shows its best side in the mild and sunny autumn, I find the first attempt at reassurance confirmed. There really is meat in all the butcher shops and supermarkets, meat in any quantity and quality. Although over 100 forint for a kilo of roast beef is no small sum for an industrial worker (average monthly income in 1979: 3900 forint), it is no grounds for outright revolt. Péter Rényi, a member of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Communist Party, reassured skeptics in a German newsmagazine: "Workers probably do not generally eat the very best cuts of beef. Other meat is 30 to 40 percent cheaper." But for Hungarian workers, such comments from their leader do not matter; they don't get to read them anyway. They are more concerned with whether, in addition to meat, they have other things they need in order to live. And in Hungary there is no shortage of these things either.

Shopping in an ABC supermarket in Budapest, I find only the labels of the products unfamiliar. Otherwise one could imagine the ABC stores, if not in Switzerland, then certainly somewhere in Austria. Produce markets also compare favorably with their Austrian neighbors. Fruit and vegetables in season are in good supply in the many small shops spread throughout the city. Even a tight family budget can cover a kilo of pears (10 forint) or peaches (12 forint). This is even more likely given the fact that a Hungarian family usually has a second income, either from other working family members or from the wide-spread "second economy." There is hardly a Hungarian of any trade who does not moonlight.

The "second economy" has made it possible for most people to tolerate the recent dramatic increase or even deregulation of prices. It is also an important mechanism in Hungary for filling gaps left by the state-planned economy. Without the "second economy," for instance, the housing shortage would be greater. Housing built by "black-market" labor keeps the housing market from collapsing entirely.

Hungarians know they are sitting pretty compared to their socialist brother-states. That strengthens their national pride, which has always kept this small people together. This feeling was also cleverly exploited by the Hungarian press when it could no longer avoid mention of strikes in Poland. The official line of the sparse information concerning the first mass strikes in a socialist country was ingeniously simple: meat shortages were the cause of the strikes. This gave Poland an air of exotic distance — closer to India than to Hungary. Just by going shopping Hungarians could learn with sympathy and pride that they lived in a different, better world.

An Occurrence at the Budapest Airport. Of course, the Polish strikes had also demanded independent unions and uncensored expression of opinion. Hungarian TV viewers were officially informed of this, however, only on August 27, three days prior to the agreement between strikers and the Polish government. In the first direct news broadcast since the beginning of the strikes, a Warsaw correspondent reported that the government would not grant the Polish workers' demand for independent unions. Then the Hungarian TV correspondent reached into his propaganda bag of tricks: anti-

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socialist and anarchist elements tried to plunge workers into a political adventure that was against their own interests. That must have made viewers sit up and take notice. Everyone living in a socialist country knows that desires for things above and beyond food on the table do not need to be imported by foreign-guided, anti-socialist forces. And there is no lack of information to make such desires seem credible. The widespread counter-information of Radio Free Europe sees to that.

Hungarians also heard news via RFE concerning an incident at the Budapest-Ferihegy airport in late August. On August 27, like every other day, check-in for the 1:15 flight to Warsaw began about noon. At twelve o'clock, György Bence and four of his friends presented to the border officers their passports, valid for travel to other socialist states. Instead of getting the passports back with a friendly "bon voyage," the five were asked to come into another room. There they were told that their trip was directed against the interests of the Hungarian and Polish governments. Bence and his friends were then sent home, but their passports remained behind. Only three weeks later could they even inquire about getting their passports returned for travel in Eastern Europe. Travel documents for Western countries, of course, had been taken away much earlier.

This was not the first time that Bence had heard it said that his activities were counter to the interests of socialist states. This time, Bence and his friends had wanted to contact the striking workers in Poland, offer them help, and find out how such help could be provided most effectively. The last time it had been the interests of the Czech state that he had supposedly injured. As many Hungarians know from RFE, Bence had been one of the signers of an open letter of protest against the sentencing of members of the Czech "Charter 77" in 1979. Of 250 who signed the letter, 10 have lost their jobs. Others, although not fired, have been professionally sidetracked or intimidated by constant administrative harassment. Bence did not have to fear losing his job: a Central Committee resolution had relieved him of it back in 1973.

Opposition in Hungary. At that time the forces of reform had been losing ground in Hungary. Their opponents took advantage of the opportunity to clean up a bit among the philosophers of the Budapest School, who at that time constituted the core of the intellectual opposition in Hungary. Their credo had been inspired by Lukacs: the country must be reformed in the name of a correctly understood Marxism. Lukacs' death suddenly deprived the Budapest School members of their protection. The opponents of reform seized the day. Along with the young philosophers Bence and Kis, the older Budapest School members also lost their jobs in the Hungarian Academy: Heller, Markus and Feher have been living and teaching in Australia since 1977. Vajda returned to Budapest at the beginning of this year. Bence and Kis never wanted to risk leaving Hungary at the price of being denied re-entry. Even the loss of their passports for tourist travel in the West could not alter their position. The attempt of Bence and his friends to travel to Warsaw was only the latest stage of the transformation that began in 1973 — the transformation of intellectual-cultural opposition into political opposition.

The Central Committee's resolution of 1973 created a severe crisis for the intellectual opposition, which until then had been Marxist in a Lukacsian sense. When the older members of the Budapest School left the country with their families in 1977, their influence was at an end. In the fall of 1977 the first *Samizdat* anthology was published. In the space of 300 pages, 21 young Hungarian intellectuals outlined their relation to Marxism. Since then, the profile of the Hungarian opposition has been determined by intellectuals independent of Marxism, including Bence and Kis. The themes of the *Samizdat* volumes that have appeared irregularly since then have become increasingly

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political. Sociological and economic problems are now discussed with less respect than was the case with the older opposition. It is no longer necessary to make reality fit Marxist dogma. The first of the 34 articles in the 1978 *Samizdat* volume deals with censorship and self-censorship. Almost all the articles were previously submitted to official publications and rejected.

In Budapest as in Poland there has been an underground university since 1978. Between 100 and 200 predominantly young people meet once a month in alternating private apartments for lectures and discussions. Although the police know of these lectures, they have not yet interfered or hindered anyone from participating. Nor has the oppressive crowding that exists at these evening meetings discouraged anyone from attending. The last topic of the lecture series before summer recess 1980 was democracy. The lively controversy over this subject reflects the differences of opinion within the Hungarian opposition. The Polish strikes are likely to sharpen these differences. The last lecturer in this series is still a member of the old guard of the intellectual opposition, but like the younger members he has long since freed himself from the bonds of abstract Marxist dogmas. He wanted to make it clear to his mostly younger audience that the simple adoption of democratic formalities would fall far short of democracy. A democratic constitution could only come about as the result of a historical learning process that each nation must go through for itself.

Here such thoughts elicited no applause. Already put on edge by the stuffy air and the hopelessly overcrowded apartment, a few activists answered him with their uncompromising call for "democratic institutions here and now!" Afterwords the lecturer described to me the workings of this "democracy here and now" policy in practice. "On a foggy September evening a young man rings my doorbell. Without beating around the bush he demands my signature on a message of solidarity for the independent unions in Poland. In glowing terms he paints a picture of a parliamentary democracy in Hungary, in which freely elected opposition representatives will keep the government in check. The first step toward this new Hungary is to be this signature." The young man had to leave without the signature. The message of solidarity was never sent. This is not to question, of course, where this intellectual's heart is. "But," he explains to me, "that cannot mean that we simply throw all our painfully gained experience overboard. If the price we have paid for our lessons is not to be too high, then we must not support politically impulsive actions."

KOR in Poland — SZETA in Hungary. The other great danger for an isolated intellectual opposition was pointed out by someone else who plays a leading role among activists. Intellectuals who simply attach themselves to a mass movement are easily susceptible to *putsch* politics. The history of the October Revolution shows what happens then, despite the best of intentions. For him and his friends, KOR's policies could be a basis for a realistic opposition politics in Hungary as well. He considers the mass strikes in Poland an ideal confirmation of KOR's outlook. He says the opposition in Hungary is in the process of becoming political, as KOR is in Poland. For support he can point to the Hungarian "League to Support the Poor" (SZETA), formed by dissidents a year ago and based on the KOR model. This committee, which openly published names and addresses of members, collects money and clothing to help the poor — who officially do not exist in Hungary. SZETA has sponsored two solidarity benefits in private gardens that brought in 10,000 forints each in aid for the poor. The activist, of course, has no illusions about the fact that even the beginnings of a workers' opposition comparable to Poland's are absent in Hungary. "The strikes this summer," he well knows, "are the result of a ten-year history of Polish workers' opposition. There is no such thing in Hungary."

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Quiet but consistent and substantial economic reforms pursued in Hungary since the late sixties have so far spared the workers empty meat pots. As classical Marxism would formulate it, there is no "revolutionary situation." In the long run, however, one may anticipate the development of a new class consciousness among Hungarian workers as well. One clear indication is a rumor circulating in Budapest that is confirmed by no one — but believed by everyone. In a Hungarian factory with some Polish workers a sympathy strike for the strikers on the Baltic coast was to take place. After negotiations with plant officials and union leaders, it was allegedly decided to forego the strike and to invite children of striking Polish workers to Hungary instead. Since the Polish strikes of this summer, striking as a means of asserting their vital interests has entered the realm of the possible for Hungarian workers as well. It cannot be ruled out that they may soon want improvements in their union representation. Significant economic reform could hasten this process. Although worker interests have for some time been represented at least at the plant level, basic decisions in Hungary are still part of the power apparatus.

Organism of State Leadership. One reason that there have been no major social eruptions in Hungary since 1956 is that the trauma of that bloody autumn is not forgotten. With quiet policies of reform, Kàdàr has made careful use of all the leeway allotted him by the geopolitical realities of Europe. The realistic pragmatism of the Hungarian leadership has again proved effective in this unpredictable autumn. After learning a lesson from its fatal endorsement of Dubcek's "reform from above," the leadership is adopting a cautious attitude this time. Hungarians do not wish to praise an allied state one day and enter it with troops the next. Instead, they are looking after their own: price increases for sugar and wine, among other things, planned for early September, were not introduced. In mid-September a new law was announced in the party newspaper *Nepszabadsag*. Restaurants and grocery stores with fewer than 10 employees may in the future be run on a largely private basis, if their operators pay the state for the opportunity to take them over as independent ventures. The menu of the "Belvarosi Kavehaz" already bears the names not only of the manager and the chef, but also of "Mrs. Kis, in charge of setting prices." Her responsibility for developments will doubtless grow in the future. If anything has the Hungarians worried on the economic front, it is rising prices.

The Catholic church, on the other hand, does not worry the Hungarian government. The political role it plays in Poland is tied to the history of that country. In Hungary, at least since 1956, the Church remains apart from political life. The Hungarian leadership would like to reach a silent understanding with the opposition: you are a cultural opposition, and we make policy. As long as the dissidents do not all too clearly cross the line into politics, the police will leave them alone.

If the status quo remains intact, confrontations between opposition and police can continue to look like the one on a warm September evening this year. On that day the police, in the Hungarian manner, called off a SZETA solidarity concert that was to be held in a public building. This is how it was done: One day before the concert date the building management received a call from the police. They were told a counter-revolutionary assembly was to take place in their hall. On the next evening the concert-goers found a notice on the door that the event was canceled. For a while about 100 people walked up and down in front of the building. A police officer got out of a patrol car next to the building. He asked the concert-goers what they were doing. They were taking a walk, he was informed. Any law against that? At that the policeman excused himself politely and disappeared in his patrol car. Soon afterwards the strollers went home, too.

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HUNGARIAN PERSPECTIVES*

1. Tibor Pokh, a Lawyer:[1] *"History of a Hunger Strike"*

Q: Why did you take part in the hunger strike of your Polish friends?

A: For a thousand years, the history of Poland and Hungary has had a decisive influence on the destinies of central and Eastern Europe. Our common patron, St. Adalbert, born in Bohemia, who baptized our first king, St. Stephen, is buried in Gniezdno. It is in his spirit and under the protection of the Holy Virgin — patroness of Hungary and Queen of Poland — that I had wished to participate in our Polish friends' protest fast. This hunger strike was observed for ten days in the church of Podkova Lesna. On my arrival in that town I asked for and was joyously granted authorization to join them. Our movement was based on the international convention of civil and political rights signed in 1966 and ratified by Hungary in 1976. The right of national self-determination and individual liberties, two principles proclaimed in this document, are the only basis for solving the problems of the peoples of our region.

The strikers were recruited from the most diverse strata of Polish society: there were among us believers and atheists, workers and intellectuals, young and old. My participation was considered a demonstration of solidarity; I hope I contributed to strengthening Hungarian-Polish friendship. We attended Mass every day. The church and its immediate environs were packed with people, and a spirit of perfect communion prevailed among the faithful. The action of the Holy Spirit was evident.

Q: What do you think of events in Poland?

A: Without being a sociologist, I am convinced we are witnessing in Poland something that could be called the birth of a revolutionary working class. I believe the strike in Podkova Lesna contributed to the growth of the democratic movement, but obviously its importance is not comparable with the transformation on a national scale that we are now witnessing. For now it is a matter of a unified movement of the entire Polish working class, whereas our strike was just a sort of collective gathering of a heterogeneous group. I hope with all my heart that the Hungarian people understand the events in Poland and will, as very often in the past, remain in solidarity with the Polish people. What I say of Hungary applies to all nations of central and Eastern Europe. If, forgetting historical continuity and yielding to any pressure whatever, Hungary should take part in an action aimed at suffocating the process of democratization that has begun in Poland, that could have tragic consequences for the Hungarian people.

*The first six interviews were collected in Budapest by Miklos Harszti, November, 1980 and published in *L'Alternative*, n. 8. Translated by David J. Parent. The seventh appeared in *Gegenstimmen*, No. 3 (January-March, 1981), pp. 22-24. Translated by David Berger.

1. Europe first became acquainted with Pakh in the Spring of 1980. Pakh was the only Hungarian to join the hunger strike organized in Poland to obtain the release of the collaborators of the independent publishing house "Nowa." It was not the first time Pakh had resorted to this vigorous form of protest. Sent to prison in 1960 at the age of fifteen for "offenses" allegedly committed in 1956, he had bombarded authorities with written protests and had organized several hunger strikes to demand decent treatment of prisoners and the cessation of abuses by agencies under the ministry of the interior. Subjected to three successive electric shocks he still continued the strike, which caused him to be classified as mentally ill, but did not lead to his release. Finally, in 1971, he was transferred to a mental asylum and released a few months later. He received us in his little sublet room whose walls were adorned with just a crucifix. The precision and speed with which he dictated his replies are those of a professional accustomed to verbal communication.

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2. Pal Szalai, Essayist:[2] *"A Shocking Indifference"*

Q: Are you optimistic about events in Poland?

A: For Poland, certainly. But I do not think that the other countries of the East can realize such reforms.

Q: Not Hungary?

A: If, from time to time, some Hungarian intellectuals raise their voice, they receive little echo from workers. But our entire intelligentsia is not "mute": since 1956 it has adopted an anti-social, pseudo-democratic and pseudo-liberal attitude. In the last one or two years some signs of independence can be observed, but one cannot speak of enthusiasm and we have no impact on workers.

Q: What, in your opinion, was Hungarian society's reaction to events in Poland?

A: One of shocking indifference. Even tamer than the official reactions, prudent as these were.

Q: And in the long run?

A: I think they'll try surreptitiously to introduce some economic reforms. But, perhaps, every radical reform will fail against the conservatives' resistance. Of course, an economic catastrophe would trigger a political crisis — which does not mean that I would wish for such a catastrophe in order to hasten the crisis. What is clear is that in Hungary no structural improvement is possible without the participation of the working class. The non-intellectuals would have to make up their mind: "I want to vote for the candidate I choose." But they haven't reached that point. Nor have the intellectuals — traumatized as they are by repression, however moderate, which followed recent protest and solidarity movements.

Q: What are the reasons for this paralysis?

A: I don't know. Perhaps it is rooted in the ideology of the "lesser evil," in the conviction that neither Kadar nor anyone could have "gotten off" any better after 1956. In reality, an adequate program and a firm will would suffice to introduce in Hungary the reforms achieved in Poland without running the least risk of repression. Unfortunately, this firm will is missing: instead of elaborating a program, we are locked in fear. But the compromise which will be a reality from now on in Poland is just a myth in Hungary. We lull ourselves into believing that we achieved it after 1956. But the intelligentsia had merely accepted the dictatorship to manage it in its own fashion. However, such an attitude has nothing in common with a genuine compromise. For the sake of peace, to take one's point-of-departure from a *de facto* situation means to consolidate power; but in the last analysis it is a submission and not a compromise. The Poles have just shown that it is possible to obtain a genuine radical compromise without endangering the military interests of the Soviet Union nor even the hegemony of the communist party.

3. A Provincial School Teacher, 25 years old: "Surprise"

Q: You were in Poland several times. What do you think of recent events that have occurred in that country?

A: I'm surprised by the scope of the movement and the results obtained. The problems in Poland must be much graver than I imagined, and the gravity of the situation must explain the government's concessions. I am no less surprised by the workers' intransigeance. Frankly, I expected them to settle for less. But the most recent events — especially the warning strikes — showed that workers are strong, that they accept their responsibilities and dare risk prior achievements to obtain new ones.

2. Literary critic and historian of philosophy, in April 1980 Pal Szalai was fired from his job as librarian for having participated in a protest movement against the Prague trial.

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Some think they are exaggerating and will end by provoking a new Czechoslovakia. Any intervention would involve enormous risks — and the Soviets know it.

Q: You know the situation in Poland well and you also know many believers in that country. That is why I am asking you the following question: are Masses celebrated in the factories with the participation of all workers — as reported at length in the Western press — evidence of a deep popular religiosity or is it essentially a political demonstration?

A: Both things exist. As for myself, for example, I am a believer, but I do not condemn religious forms of political demonstration. Certainly everyone participated with sincere faith at the Masses during the Gdansk strike, but I think everyone knew the political import of the act.

Q: What lesson can we draw from the events in Poland for Hungary?

A: On a crude level, complainers are sometimes advised to go "report it to the free unions." A worker asking for a raise (this is a case I have heard of) is told by his boss: "If we had a free union, you could complain to it." Workers I know envy the Poles and would really like to imitate them. But the working class's political and ideological consciousness is very backward compared with their "economic" consciousness. Very few of them would be willing to compromise their monthly salary of 4000-5000 forints by speaking up at a plant meeting. György Konrad rightly says that freedom of thought is currently the target of "typewriter-snipers."

Q: Could you quote some opinions you've heard about events in Poland?

A: The young approve of them. (As for taking action, it is something else.) Their elders are often distrustful: the speed with which the demands were met makes them suspicious. Men of fifty, having been scolded once, express their reservations and fear the consequences — which does not prevent them from sympathizing with the workers.

Q: Did you hear any negative views?

A: Very rarely, and at a very crude level, of the type like: "They're going to deprive us of meat to supply it to Poland." It is a matter of bad information.

4. Andras Hegedüs, Sociologist, ex-Prime Minister: "Towards a New Historical Bloc?"

Q: In your opinion, which was challenged by many people, it is possible to conceive in Eastern Europe of an alternative of democratic development ending in a historical compromise and, hence, in a pluralist society without parliamentarism, based on the multi-party system. Are we currently seeing in Poland an evolution of this type and, if so, does this tendency have a chance of winning?

A: For me, historical compromise is not a political proposition, but an alternative of possible and desirable development — an alternative that leads to the creation of a new "historical bloc" (Gramsci), transcending existing monolithic social regimes. It would be a pluralist society in which, on the one hand, power would tolerate different non-integrable movements, organizations and tendencies, for it would understand that there can be no genuinely socialist and dynamic society without their cooperation; on the other hand, the forces controlling power — forces representing diverse social interests — would not seek to undermine power by insurrectional means, nor to constitute themselves as a political party in order to take over the direction of the state by means of parliamentary elections. They would be content with the possibility offered them to control power by social pressure. The forms of this control are defined by the compromise I have just mentioned, and the forces in question know that they ought to struggle incessantly to apply and improve them. It would be a matter of a society where, thanks to new forms of conflict-resolution, acute social crises could be avoided. It is not a model of "harmonious society," but anyway the latter

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exists only as a hypocritical illusion of a few. I think that at the present hour in Poland the two parties involved are following this route of compromise. After a few days of hesitation, the government and the party recognized the inter-factory strike committee as negotiating partner and finished by accepting its political and economic demands. In my opinion, their most important concession is the authorization of free and autonomous unions, whose creation is being carried on with great dynamism despite attempts to place bureaucratic obstacles in their path. Workers are formulating demands that remain within the compromise framework: instead of seeking to destroy power, they seek to transform it in a democratic sense. The cause of Poland's democratic development depends on the respect of both parties for the compromise thus realized. The party that would denounce this compromise would bear a tremendous responsibility before history. All conditions would then be united to unleash a bloody civil war, whose consequences would be incalculable not only for the destiny of Europe, but also for that of the whole world.

5. György Bence, Philosopher:[3] *"A New Formula"*

Q: Could you say in a few words what you consider essential in the Polish events?

A: Formerly, those who wished democracy to come to this Eastern Europe which is subject to the Soviet regime had a global conception of the "good" political institution: complete parliamentary democracy or total autonomy, or else a synthesis of the two. However, they also thought it was impossible, in normal times, to undertake anything whatever to realize this ideal, to organize or recruit supporters — this would be only self-denunciation or obedience to a certain spectacular taste for martyrdom, as they certainly had grounds to think. Some were waiting for the "big opportunity," the weakening of power, and they dedicated themselves to "keeping the flame burning" for the day others would come to light some candles and cast a little more light on the walls of official institutions. After 1976, the Polish democratic opposition invented a new formula which was, from a certain viewpoint, the opposite of the old one. It was no longer a question of clinging to a great project of democratic transformation: it is necessary to be resigned to seeing the existing, essentially anti-democratic regime be perpetuated. But within this framework, it is possible to be assured of an area for democratic autonomy and, within certain limits, formulate democratic demands. But this area must be extracted by force, and the demands carry weight only to the extent that they are supported by all.

Q: But is it not true that free unions in Poland claim not to be involved in politics?

A: It would be easy to show that they are indeed engaged in politics, but they do not say so openly, in order to be more readily accepted by the government. As for me, I think that it is not just under constraint and in a spirit of compromise that they invented this formula and that they really do *not* intend to intervene in decisions and their implementation. They seem to be saying to the government and to the party: "Do your work, since it must be, but do it well, since we will no longer accept being its victims." Certainly, that is politics, for to have a policy presupposes that one occupies a position of power. But, in reality, this power is a counter-power: the free unions do not want to replace the party and the government.

Q: Is it not too much to want to explain everything by this "new tactic" of the Polish opposition? Do you truly believe that their movement proceeds from a preconceived plan, decreed in advance?

3. With his friend, Janos Kis, Bence is a member of the opposition in Hungary. They are also co-authors of numerous political books and essays.

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A: Obviously, I was not there when that was decided and in such cases the organizers are very discreet. Nonetheless, I think that the strike would not have gone off with such coordination and discipline without long preparatory planning. But the preliminary propaganda had been public. "Stay in the factory, demand free unions!" were slogans propagated by the *samizdat*. Had everything, absolutely everything been foreseen in advance? Obviously, certain developments, certain connections — even if they are not impossible to foresee — showed up in their real significance only "en route." At the start, the party must have appeared to the workers to be a source of constraints. It had to be deprived of certain of its prerogatives, and its influence limited. But, at the present time, even if a tragic outcome still is to be feared, the coexistence of the party and the free unions is a reality. And whoever says coexistence, says cooperation — cooperation in the course of which each of the cooperating parties submits to modifications. Would it not be possible to believe that the party seeks an ideology other than that of total peer? That it would change little by little from the sole party, which it is, to *one* of the parties? Or without thinking of the party as an organization, let us consider simply the mass of men who by their social position, are linked with the institutions. It is surely a mass, and who would dare to claim that it consists only of people without value? If we are pluralists, let us go all the way and try to conceive a future that takes these people into account. But perhaps my imagination is running too far ahead....

6. Janos Kis, Philosopher:[4] *"Why Not in Hungary?"*

Q: What lessons can a Hungarian dissident draw from the Polish events?

A: Why should what was possible in Poland not be so in Hungary? If a mass movement struggling for limited objectives comes to light in Hungary, we can imagine that the Hungarian government too will choose the route of compromise and the Soviet Union will take note of it, as in the case of the Polish compromise. But we are very far from seeing this "if" transformed into a reality. In our country the masses are not psychologically mature and do not have organizations adequate to unleash, on short notice, a movement comparable with that of the Polish workers. At the present moment, the problems of Hungarian dissidents are much smaller than those of their Polish comrades.

Q: What do you think of the opinion, very widespread in Hungary, that the road to democratization does not necessarily go by way of open struggle of the masses and opponents?

A: The history of Soviet Eastern Europe has until now known two types of attempts: the first is illustrated by 1956 in Hungary and the second by 1968 in Czechoslovakia. No one can seriously believe that such attempts could have a happy outcome as long as the Soviet Union remains the dominant power in Eastern Europe. The second kind of attempt consists in decreeing reforms, like the Hungarian economic reform of 1968, with its related political and cultural phenomena. These attempts do not provoke Soviet intervention but, on the other hand, they are "revocable" at any moment. The political elements which advocate seeking reform do not have autonomous positions to defend their conquests and to extract new concessions from the government. So I think that at the present time the road opening for Eastern Europe to move toward democracy is passing between two historical impasses: on the one hand, the total challenging of the authority of the regime in power; and, on the other, the acceptance

4. One of the initiators, with Bence, of the "parallel public sphere." Both have been deprived of their employment for years.

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of reforms imposed from above. This narrow road consists in promoting limited changes sustained by autonomous organized forces independent of power. This has been the tactic of the Polish opposition since 1976; this is the development which is becoming reality in Poland. Of course, it does not follow that the question is posed in the same terms in Hungary today. Undeniably, after 1956 Polish policy was nothing but a long series of failures, while Hungarian policy was crowned with success. But by when will the Hungarian government be in a position to satisfy all the important groups that constitute public opinion? The conditions under which it was able to make policy in the sixties and seventies were extremely favorable to it. But no player can count on an excellent hand always. The relatively balanced development which characterized the Hungarian economy until 1973 is now coming to an end. From now on the frequent recurrence of crises shaking economic life can be expected, and the population will be more and more inclined to modify its attitude toward politics. However, it is not just the worsening of the economic situation that is susceptible to mobilizing people. The political atmosphere can deteriorate because of the situation of Hungarian minorities in neighboring countries. Fewer and fewer people believe that the government will try to do anything in favor of Hungarian minorities in Rumania and Slovakia. As for the Soviet adventure in Afghanistan, it has opened eyes to the dangers our external dependence entails. The Church itself is showing signs of fermentation.... As long as it was satisfied with avoiding social conflicts, the Hungarian government gave evidence of a certain adroitness — in this regard it maneuvered better than the Polish government. But if these conflicts become inevitable, it will seem that this slight advantage of the Hungarian government is nothing compared with the organic disease it is suffering from and which it moreover shares with the Polish government, the name of which is: absense of democracy. The little groups of the Hungarian dissidents are in no position to influence the evolution of the crisis. Their social impact is still very modest: it does not extend beyond the circle of intellectuals, who are rather marginal. However, this influence is growing and this one more sign of the approaching crisis. Today, the number of those disposed to participate actively in demonstrations organized by the opposition is higher than two or three years ago. Moreover, the organization of the opposition is improving: compared with the amorphous state it was in the past, today it seems structured.

7. Zoltan Asille and Anna Balajthy, unemployed sociologists:[5] *"For Hungary Everything Is a Lie"*

Q: A far-reaching social process of change has taken place in Poland. How do you judge this as a Hungarian dissident?

Zoltan: In single-party totalitarian regimes striving for omnipotent power in all spheres of life, the very concept of "opposition" expresses essential political differences of opinion. Such systems regard themselves as the very acme of historical development where society is perfected in such a manner that the planning center, the party's political bureau, criticizes itself, representing its own opposition. We thus have had the unappetizing spectacle a hundred times of the very same dictator — the same Politburo — again and again announces a new line every year and carried it through with the same apparatus. The official who only yesterday has come out for the opposition, will today either enthusiastically carry out the new line or will be condemned for his loyalty of the day before. Theoretically, therefore, only individuals can hold opposing opinions within the party. And if this is true within the party, it is

5. Zoltan Zsille and Anna Balajthy, sociologists unemployed for political reasons in the "land of acute shortage of labor power," belong to the cosigners of the Budapest Solidarity Letter on Charter 77 and are founding members of *Szeta*.

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even more for ordinary citizens. "Opposition" — which in its original meaning visualizes differing social ideas, or at least requires a change in the setting — under truly existing socialism means "enemy."

Doing away with political debates on the part of the public prosecutor considered justified by part of the opposition in Hungary; they therefore attempt to free themselves from the label "opposition" and call themselves "inside critics." As scriptural believers in true socialism, as seekers after some foggy concept of pan-social interest, they may indeed be outsiders but are nevertheless trustworthy and therefore harmless. The consequences are two-fold: on the one hand, this segment loses the regime's trust and goodwill, while on the other, the regime's opponents do not basically understand what the others are criticizing. Only tragic experiences, fear of bloody sacrifices or a catastrophe makes us understand such a standpoint which for tactical considerations is represented to the public by another group of the opposition. The system is not questioned in its basic foundations: they only refer to reforms in that connection.

Whether you speak of religious apprehension or about preserving an incognito, I understand both of these points: they are only versions of the Bolshevik worldview. I have my insight into this because I was myself a prisoner of this Bolshevik manner of thinking. But today I no longer accept them. Tactics is a partial problem and it is debatable as to which is to be made use of. In a police state with a human mask such as Hungary, it is also a matter of luck. But tactics is not the essential difference between the previously mentioned opposition and the one to which I count myself. It is that *we* strive for a radical change in society. It is through this and only through this that we expect the solution to the basic social questions.

With regard to changes in Poland, there are those who believe in the reformability of the socialist system and may deem themselves to be vindicated; but there are also those who, like myself, consider this to be impossible. First of all, I consider the demands to be revolutionary, although we can also call them radical reforms. The stress, however, does not lie in the concept. The essential thing is that a society oppressed by the party and the state — the citizens themselves — have by their own strength achieved a victory and marked with the signed agreement the defeat of the party-state. Such agreements, however, are only pieces of paper of no value in the eyes of communists because they only respect power. Everywhere and always, such agreements will have to be defended and only then we shall have a new society: democracy and the fall of a totalitarian system. It would also signify that the Soviet Union has lost all power over one of its more important colonies. As long as the Soviet Union does not collapse or, on the basis of a fantastic concatenation of events and at fantastic price, release East European countries, it will not willingly give up such power. Such an assumption would be as naively tragic as that of Imre Nagy's confidence that they could freely return in accordance with the promises.

The Poles know this well. They have had the experience that what they have received is not something presented to them on a silver platter but has been won by their own efforts. Those who welcome the independent unions as a sign of the system's reformability, equate the state with society, the party with the state and progress and democracy with the communist party. But the opposite is true: in spite of repression by the state, the party and foreign rule, society is still capable of reform or still capable of revolutionary processes.

Q: You have referred to national bourgeois resistance. Is there such a thing as proletarian opposition?

Zoltan: Like all political questions this one also has been camouflaged in a joke. It is

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hard to prove that there are strikes because everyone is always striking in Hungary. How could one notice where exactly the strike is? This joke, naturally, has its reactionary side in that it gives the impression that no work is being done in Hungary. As a matter of fact, many people are working very hard.

Anna: Perhaps the strike is not organized: it is not known who the leaders are, the demands are not always formulated in detail and, on a whole, they remain economic demands — although, as far as the system is concerned, every demand, every contrary opinion is immediately viewed in a political light endangering the entire system. There are continuous economic strikes in Hungary; namely, workers simply put down their tools and do not work....

Q: At the present moment there is again something like a reform taking place in Hungary. Is it in the direction of greater efficiency, profitability or competition?

Zoltan: We have always had the efficiency slogans. Always the same catch phrases, but nothing ever happens!

Q: Where, then, lies the basic problem of this inability for a consistent economy?

Zoltan: The essence of socialist economic planning is simply centralism — until the whole world has become a gigantic operation.

Q: But didn't the economic reforms point in the direction of decentralization?

Zoltan: It is logical for the concentration of power to also require central economic planning. Whenever such slogans about decentralization appear, a new concentration thrust is just then being concluded. While we are speaking here about a so-called reform cadre and there is a huge propaganda campaign for decentralization, it is this reform cadre that has caused the reactionary swing in Hungarian politics during the last few decades: the merging of communities and cooperatives. The important point here is the fact that one third of the communities have lost their independence. Even the agricultural cooperatives that presently may already cover ten or eleven villages — have been brought together under a central authority.

Q: Have there not already been any debates regarding this?

Zoltan: Yes, and everything remains as before. This only proves the clique's cynicism.

Q: What are the limits of such discussions?

Anna: The Minister of the Economy, Romany, was deposed over the debate on cooperative mergers. He came out against them on TV.

Q: But don't the people recognize the uselessness of such debates....?

Zoltan: Of course. We have gone beyond ignorance. Most workers do not believe that the decisions are theirs. I have taken part in some production sessions. Most workers do not even dream of going to them. Perhaps one is able to convince some to take part because there are still two hours until the train's departure and it is warmer at the meeting place than in the railway station. He takes a seat, falls asleep, rests.

Anna: I also wanted to state that we have gone beyond that point. This was the healthy result of the "consolidation" period and its main task was indeed to make the people apathetic.

Zoltan: Clearly, it does not pay to say anything. One must not talk....

Q: But what then...?

Zoltan: There will be scuffles. Definitely. Today there are even occasions where managers do not dare cross the factory plant. This happened in the Ganz plant. The local cooperative agency made use of its veto power which in itself is something fantastic. The cooperative has the right of veto and can stop production when workers labor under life-endangering conditions or wages are far below the country-wide average, or when they are forced to do things which are not within the workers' job range. This is a *de facto* strike. Here the reason for the veto by the cooperative was the

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poisoned air. The cooperative's secretary wrote to the manager: "In this matter, I am ordering a work stoppage because the air is harmful to health; I request the installation of a filtering plant." It is not known where the cooperative's secretary is now but the plant is still working.

At a party committee proceeding I met a lot of people. On one occasion the secretary of a pharmaceutical plant responsible for its security had to be present. He predicted an explosion and demanded halting operations at the plant. The explosion took place and the plant manager held the secretary responsible, hinting that, if he had kept quiet, the matter would somehow be squashed. The secretary protested and finally, in the long run, he had three proceedings on his hands. Another example: thefts of lumber took place in a shipyard. The supervisor thought that if he uncovered it he would have to report it. That was his job, after all. He did uncover it. He was very fond of coffee and it struck him that he had recently been offered many cups of coffee; half an hour later he vomited.... An investigation brought to light the presence of cyanide. Since this poisoning attempt he has concluded that it was not his job to uncover such matters!

Q: Aren't workers also involved in that?

Anna: Yes, workers also steal. The salient point in this system is that all must put their fingers in the mess. Everyone should feel guilty, for then he will have no moral ground to criticize others and can be blackmailed by anyone. Besides, he has stolen only one board while the boss himself steals a thousand times more from his pocket....

Anna: This is also the basis for the "black" compromise in Kadarism. As long as workers are content, things will work out. It all depends on whether or not larger groups believe their well-being to be endangered. If the standard of living rapidly sinks, when the people see that they cannot survive under hitherto existing conditions, it will make no sense to keep quiet about these puny black market affairs and at the same time retain a bad conscience. It will then pay to get things cleared up.

Q: What role does the intelligentsia play in this matter?

Anna: Polish intellectuals could maintain a relative independence. In Hungary it was typical for intellectuals to collaborate, but politically all they got for this was nothing but their individual well-being. Whoever was not corrupt or sufficiently immoral — and there have always been such individuals — dropped out of the intelligentsia. This was so during the Rakosi period. After the moral rebellion of 1956 came imprisonment. After the amnesty of the early 1960s some of those sentenced immediately returned to their high positions.

Q: But hasn't such collaboration now reached its limits?

Anna: New groups are no longer being received under this compromise. It served only the post-1956 consolidation. Several generations have since then arisen, have completed their studies that not only fail to secure their intellectual status but they do not even satisfy the conditions of their direct physical existence. For example, they do not have any housing.

Q: What is the role here of the Hungarian opposition?

Zoltan: We have already mentioned that in the case of Poland the present situation was preceded by the consolidation of intelligentsia and workers. There is no sign in Hungary of any contact being formed between intellectuals and the working classes. Perhaps, we are at a point reached by the Poles some five years earlier, but it will not require an additional five years to reach it. This has to do with the differentiation within the opposition. I should very much wish it to happen that way because it is not a good thing that is now being urged within the opposition: to lay down a common line for persons with different opinions.

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Q: But doesn't this strangely contradict what has been happening in Eastern Europe and what has happened to you: censorship in the Samizdat*?*
Zoltan: Yes. In June 1979 I was asked to write an article by the Committee for an Istvan Bibo Memorial Volume. In June 1980 I was told that my contribution was not accepted for that samizdat edition. Basically, the reason given was the criteria of the Hungarian censorship policy. This happened in spite of the fact that the editors knew very well what my views were, and that they could not expect that I would now begin to censor myself.
Q: To what extent does 1956 represent a break in Hungarian history?
Anna: What has changed is that, in spite of everything up to 1956, Hungarian society had its roots in the social structure of 1945 and the majority of the people acknowledged their positions. The levelling took place in 1956 in connection with total apathy and fear. Stalinism and Rakosism then became the definitive system at a time when it had already been overthrown — although Kadarism had replaced it as a result of the revolution. This apathy lasted twenty years but I believe that this epoch has come to an end.
Q: Does the opposition already set itself political aims?
Zoltan: Szeta is such an organization that goes beyond the bounds of the intelligentsia, its express aim being to come in contact with the working masses.
Anna: Of course I have no fear that the Hungarian intelligentsia will bring along their traditional values to this mutual effort, namely, their education, their ability to read and write; that they can live under conditions of public exposure, etc. It is this knowledge that they must place at the disposal of others.
Zoltan: And this is also the explicit program of *Szeta*: legal aid, etc.
Anna: But for this type of work we have no need of intellectuals who collaborate with publishers or who run to the party central office for favors. Here we need persons who are least mentioned when the Hungarian opposition is referred to: those who are of plebeian ancestry or who have grown up in such an environment, those who are in close touch with the laboring masses; not an opposition group like the Budapest School, but one like, for example, that which developed into *Szeta* and which is not revisionist-Marxist, not Maoist-Marxist, but altogether non-Marxist, appealing to Hungarian traditions, to the values of Hungarian culture.
Q: And why does the collaborating intelligentsia just now speak up?
Anna: Szeta shows what everyone in Hungary could have known but did not want to acknowledge: that broad segments of society have been living below the poverty level.
Zoltan: Here it is not only a matter of the collaboration of the intelligentsia but also that of the West. The journalist from the West writes nothing about the fact that the letter "sz" in *Szeta* stands for poverty for they live in the Hilton and eat salami. But only five minutes from the inner city people live in miserable shacks without any water or toilets. What appears in the West concerning Hungary is just simply a lie.
Anna: The "Internal colonization" can also be seen in the regional sphere. The country is fully departmentalized in a hierarchical fashion. Foreigners usually come to the higher places or to Potemkin villages along the main traffic routes.
Q: What are the further aims of Szeta*?*
Zoltan: It is a question of finances. The members of Szeta are poor; they cannot travel to villages. When *Szeta* becomes a strong organization and disposes of sufficient funds, it can hand out stipends and will no longer depend on chance or personal acquaintance as to which of the poor will be helped.
Anna: Szeta is not a directly political organization and this disadvantage is likewise its advantage, for at the moment most people can be more readily mobilized for

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charitable purposes than for a radical political platform.
Zoltan: But otherwise it is an unequivocal political movement or initiative, although at this time its activity is not political.
Anna: When the social dynamics will be speeded up, political organizing will sooner or later become the required program. Let us think of 1956 or of Poland at the present time. It is really an emergency solution when the intellectuals must be the lever and must appear in the interest of those who for the time being are not strong or decisive enough to demand what is coming to them.
Q: Is this being accelerated now in Hungary?
Zoltan: The following event goes back to August 1956. Istvan Bibo asked his students how they would react in case of a radical turn of events in Hungary. The majority was of the opinion that the students would concern themselves with nothing but their professional prospects, the housing problem and that they would altogether have no interest in politics. Two months later the students were out in the street.

CZECHOSLOVAK PERSPECTIVES*

"The Poles Have Learned the Lesson of Our Defeat...."[1]

It is hard to judge the Polish "hot summer" from here. Our mass media hide more from us than they tell us. We get something from foreign radio. The Poles have undoubtedly learned some lessons from our defeat in 1968. To express their dissatisfaction with the regime, they have been capable of using one of the most powerful weapons: the strike. And they have disregarded official bans against it. Events demonstrate a very wise, well-disciplined, but also determined and obstinate leadership — not to mention the workers' resolve. They are not intimidated by the idea that, at some point, there will not be any food and the regime will blame them rather than itself; nor do they cringe at the outcome which befell the Czech experiment. Their political demands have been as firm as their economic demands. One has the impression they deal with the regime in power as with an adversary. After all, what is the difference between the capitalist owner appropriating the fruits of labor and a bunch of functionaries in the ruling clique who, in addition, have led the state to the edge of economic ruin?

*News from Poland arrives to Czechoslovakia through the official press (which does not spare warnings and threats to the "anti-socialist elements" it discovers in the independent union movement) and Western radio. As for the Czech opposition, it still suffers the authorities' police oppression. Several leaders of the Charter 77 Movement (Jiri Lederer, Z. Tominova — the movement's spokesperson — Julius Tomin, etc., have gone into exile recently. These interviews are part of a larger number of responses to a poll conducted in November 1980 by the opposition review *Listy*, edited in Prague and published in the West under the direction of Jiri Pelikan. The question was simple: How do you estimate the impact in Czechoslovakia of the creation of the Polish independent unions? Given the present situation, the respondents must remain anonymous, although basic information about the authors is appended to the text. Originally published in *L'Alternative*. n. 8 (December, 1980), pp. 25-29. Translated by Charles Levin.

1. This 45 year old secondary school teacher was a member of the Czech Communist Party until 1970, when he was expelled. He has not signed Charter 77, but actively sympathizes.

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Apparently, the Poles have something we lack: above all, the history of an oppressed but not subservient people who has defended itself regardless of the price to be paid. We, on the other hand, have always been "reasonable" and we have even collaborated — excusing our weakness in the name of "incalculable consequences," etc. The Poles have fought their regime for 30 years and those in power have had to give in more than once. I am not religious, but it seems to me that when they defend freedom of religion, the Poles are defending something more — and this reflects on the moral fiber of the nation. For us, contemporary Poland is above all stimulating. In many ways, it may be an example, if ever we choose to heed it. Clearly, our political leadership is taking account of what is going on. We can see it in what it hides: the independent unions, the liberation of political prisoners, the right to strike, the religious problem. When they tell us something, they emphasize economic demands and want to impress on us that these are entirely a question of prices and supplies.

However, I do not think that the Polish developments will lead to a comparable situation in Czechoslovakia at the present time. Unlike the Poles, our difficulties are not so great as to force the majority of the nation to seriously question their causes. Here, the working class is the freest sector of the population and the manpower shortage gives it the opportunity to ignore what "upper echelons" are saying. But their consumerist optic — voluntarily adopted — shields them from concern for what is going on: firing, harrassment, imprisonment and persecution of individuals for their ideas. They do not insist on the fact that they are the "class in power" and should govern for the good. They leave power to those who want it, without showing any great interest. I do not know whether there is a group of workers in Czechoslovakia which would show solidarity with Polish workers on strike.

In spite of this, and without predicting how much the Polish workers will be able to keep of what they have already won, the Polish events represent a major breach in a hitherto utterly frozen situation. They have refuted so much "sacred" dogma that existing regimes — and I do not mean just Poland — will have to wonder whether they can continue to exercise power solely through brute force.

"Even the Unbelievable Can Become Reality. . . ."[2]

Not long ago, I read in *Rudé Pravo* a reasonable study on the reasonable method of doing things — in particular, as concerns old buildings. The article demonstrated clearly that instead of demolishing decaying structures and building new ones, it was better to modernize old ones. It saves cash, energy and materials. Not long before that, we were demolishing with a vengeance and, in the same newspaper, the wise men and the experts were proclaiming that renovations were a waste of time. Eventually they came around to seeing the advantage of working with what is already standing, with what can be adapted and improved, and that, moreover, this approach can work.

Events in Poland gave me the same favorable impression as this *Rudé Pravo* article. For years even the most intelligent people have argued that all positive change within Warsaw Pact countries was impossible without radical change in the USSR. Thus, we have amassed mountains of compelling arguments to the effect that minor attempts to improve the existing structures were doomed to failure and that it was necessary to wait: no doubt for demolition, but also for Godot. The Poles have reminded us that we cannot shackle the future in the prognostications of oracles and politicos. Things and events can be set in motion without waiting. They have belied the logic of development. Even the unbelievable can become reality. So, even a decrepit old house

2. The respondent is 45 years old. He was originally a priest, but today is a worker. He signed Charter 77.

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slated for demolition can be renovated and made habitable, without resorting to explosives, bulldozers, and other blunt instruments....

"The Germ of Dual Power"[3]

Even if we still do not know what will be the real consequences of the Polish events, one fact remains: we are looking at one of the most important events in the history of the Eastern bloc since 1956 and 1968. The Polish workers have shown that it is possible to force the regime to make far-reaching concessions, through collective action, and that they have learned just as much from modern Polish history as from workers' movements in other parts of Eastern Europe. This series of events has also demonstrated the precariousness of the political superstructure of the current regime, as well as its lack of any room for maneuver, since it does not dare use force.

When I have asked my friends who do not generally pay much attention to this sort of thing, I have only received sympathy. But at the same time they stress that in Poland the situation is quite different from ours because there is real misery there. The Polish strikes will influence our leaders against brutal increases in prices, or at least to prepare for them more carefully. On the other hand, it is possible they will attempt to destroy potential avenues for opposition in advance, particularly in the ranks of the intelligentsia. However, the leadership's fear of the masses' dissatisfaction seems exaggerated. I don't believe for a moment that our working class could follow the Polish example. To begin with, they still have something to lose and, on top of that, they are much more demoralized and lack solidarity.

One more word on the situation in Poland. We have seen the germination of dual power, and the government will try to destroy it by every possible means. Naturally, it will do this mainly in order to preserve its privileges, but also on behalf of its allies who see in this dual power a dangerous element of political pluralism — which is totally unacceptable in the Eastern bloc. If the Polish power elite is really in danger, it will request "fraternal aid." For the time being, however, it seems that they are aware of the necessity for concessions and are preparing a counter-offensive. Will it succeed in breaking Solidarity and corrupting the working class? Everything depends on this.

"Overcoming the Isolation of the Opposition...."[4]

Qualitatively, the Polish events differ from all earlier reform attempts in the Soviet bloc. They have developed completely outside the party and, for the first time in history, the party is forced to negotiate with the opposition. The movement is led by workers and not by intellectuals or reformist communists. We have seen the birth of a new workers' organization independent of the party, and this has broken the party's monopoly of power (including the monopoly of information, since a legally independent union daily paper has begun to appear). The tradition of workers' struggle against the predominance of the party (born in 1956) has accumulated a great deal of experience and it has generated new leaders who have displayed a lot of political wisdom (order and peace is maintained, circumspection is shown in the formulation of political demands — since these might be taken as provocations; they recognize the leading role of the party, are realistic, use fewer big words, act more, and effectively).

Naturally, certain unique features of Poland have contributed to the movement's

3. The respondent is 54 years old, well-educated, out of work, and used to belong to the party. He did not sign Charter 77, but sympathizes — although with reservations.

4. The respondent is 52 years old, a veteran researcher, and member of the party until 1970. He sighed Charter 77.

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success. The "opposition" has not been isolated from the rest of society. Numerous workers employed in the power structure, including the social sciences, participate in one way or another in the attempt to modify the system (signing protest leaflets, for example). They have succeeded in overcoming fear. No doubt, intellectuals have strongly contributed to this through past and present activity. In the party, there have not been such great purges that large numbers of communists would find themselves in the "opposition" ranks and able to influence the movement. It looks as if the party leadership also has an interest in overcoming the crisis in order to gain greater scope for a more independent politics (e.g., "there are no winners, no losers; it is Poland which has gained" — which is the opinion and aspiration of both sides in the dispute). This is completely the opposite of what is going on here in Czechoslovakia, where the leadership is only interested in one thing: preserving the status quo, i.e., its own position. Naturally, in Poland, there is also the old tradition of fighting for freedom which has shaped the nation during centuries. This has created stereotypes, so-to-speak, which can be used in crisis situations like the present. Undoubtedly, there is also the role of the Church. Even if it maintains a certain neutrality, it plays an important political role, since it has never become subservient to the state and has always attempted to realize its own demands and, as such, the demands of the majority of the Polish people — at least in matters of freedom of conscience.

All this explains why Polish workers resolve fundamental, everyday problems in a totally different manner — including the present crisis. I do not think the difference is due to their greater misery. This hardship was only the straw that broke the camel's back. Nor is the difference explained by reference to the fact that Polish workers have nothing left to lose. In 1956, for example, the economic situation in Czechoslovakia and Poland was not much different, but there were different reactions. The most important factor, however, is that the working class in Poland has refused to be corrupted. Our working class has had only one experience of struggle in a socialist regime: the strikes which followed the monetary reform.[5] And this can only reflect on it its general attitude. What do we learn from all this? In my opinion, the most important thing would be to overcome the opposition's isolation and to extend *Samizdat* activities beyond the circle of the "persecuted" in order to influence other sectors of the population.

Discussion on Poland? Many sympathize with the Polish workers, praise their actions and hope they continue. But on the whole, people do not want to get involved. Some say: "It is not good for us because right now we are going to have to send food to Poland. It is we who are going to pay." And others: "Oh, they have only got to keep socking it to them, but it is no use to us. It is eleven o'clock now, I have done my little moonlighting and I am going home. So it is hardly worth changing anything at all. . . ."

"The Adage: Poles are not Czechs. . . ."[6]

The current deteriorating tendency of the Czech economy will translate into the same difficulties as in Poland and will run up against the same obstacles. The rupture of economic links and their replacement by a system of personal channels are characteristic of this tendency. Thus, the way the Poles resolve their economic problems and resulting social questions provides an example for our workers and maybe even our intellectuals. I received the questionnaire just when we have at home,

5. In 1953, monetary reforms were proclaimed from day to day, reducing savings to nothing and provoking strikes and demonstrations.

6. The respondent is a 45 year old functionary without party since the birth of Charter 77 — which he supports.

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for the second time (and with the prospect of less hasty perusal), Jiri Lederer's volume of interviews.[7] I think it would be worth the trouble to cite some lines from what Hanzelka and Zikmund[8] told the author: "We can only say that a pluralist system would satisfy the needs of our country in the long run. But a pluralist system is possible without political parties. Different social sectors would exert various influences on subsequent evolution — influences which would conform to their concrete participation in this evolution."

Similar words have been spoken by Andrei Sakharov in the past. Personally, I hope that the persons I have quoted are right — even if I am far from convinced. And I think Poland can supply some answers to numerous questions. The free unions, as well as other autonomous organizations, could bring about the situation discussed by the "globe-trotters" and academicians, i.e., the possibility of the subjects of socialist society freely expressing their interests. Of course, this does not correspond to democracy. But it approximates it enough so that anyone who believes as much in democracy as in socialism might consider, in time, that we have seen the birth of something in which one might live with dignity — whatever it may be worth.

In sum, this optimistic scenario will probably never be realized. There are plenty of other possibilities: a rapid regression resulting from intervention or under the direct threat of intervention with tanks. Or a slow attrition which ends by returning to the original situation, as Gomulka did between 1956 and 1970. Alternatively, everything might be achieved — of which it could be said that liberty is not divisible: either you have it or you do not, in which case they will not have it.

What influence will the Polish events have on us Czechs? Many think that if the present relative impoverishment is followed by an absolute impoverishment waiting in the wings, this might produce something comparable to the Polish situation in Czechoslovakia. I am not so sure of this because, in all likelihood,the old adage "The Poles are not Czechs" which was coined in 1939 in Poland and which was often repeated seventeen years later (1956), is still valid. A great deal depends on what happens to the Poles. For our leadership, this is a precious occasion, for which they should get down on their knees and thank God: the possibility of forestalling a crisis, without strikes or other shocks, and perhaps even without any formal institutional modifications, by making things evolve in the direction taken in Poland. But for this, certain minimal values are necessary, like intellectual and moral standards; but these probably do not exist among the Czech leadership. This is why it is much more probable they will just inventory the sewing machines in order to prevent the production of armbands destined to distinguish the members of strike committees.

7. One of the first signers of Charter 77, Jiri Lederer studied at Krakow and his second wife is Polish. In early 1972, he was condemned to two years in prison for articles written in May 1968 in which he attacked antisemitism in Polish politics and criticized Gomulka, the party leader, who was deposed in December 1970 after bloody Baltic riots. He was arrested again in January 1977 and spent three years in prison for transmitting forbidden authors' manuscripts abroad. Released in 1980, Lederer was forced to emigrate because the authorities were threatening to deport his wife to West Germany as a foreigner. His book, *Czech Interviews,* is a series of conversations with cultural figures from the Prague Spring, conducted in 1976-77. After his arrest in January 1977, those interviewed, with the exception of Hamel, who was already in prison, published these pieces abroad as a homage to Lederer.

8. Jiri Hanzelka and Miloslav Zikmund are two widely appreciated and much read Czech "globetrotters." From 1947 to 1950, they did study tours of Africa and South America and, from 1950 to 1964, they crisscrossed Asia, Australia and the South Pacific. After putting together an account of these voyages, they were separated in the mid-1960s. Hanzelka (born in 1920) was an enthusiastic participant of the Prague Spring, and later signed Charter 77. Zikmund remained on the political sidelines.

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"Can We Learn a Lesson?"[9]

The Polish events interest us, not only because we are neighbors and their victories, like their defeats, can have and will have consequences here, but also because there is an immense similarity between 1968 and 1980 in Poland. Even among those who are not generally interested in politics, I have encountered great interest in the Polish situation — lots of approval and the hope: "I only wish they succeed." I have also heard praise for the intelligent way Poles have conducted themselves, the deliberate way in which they are proceeding, and their caution *vis à vis* the Soviet Union. It is surprising to see how all the movement representatives act in a circumspect, diplomatic manner, eschewing ill-considered talk and hysteria. And those who hear them understand only too well: they do not insist on harsher words, or demand satisfactions to which they certainly have a right.

Personally, I admire their inner discipline, their cohesion and the tacit understanding between the Polish people and their spokesmen. And I ask myself whether it was precisely on this point that we blew it in Czechoslovakia — whether in 1968 we paid for expressing our opinions too loudly and too clearly. At any rate, such prudence just did not seem possible then, since most of the renewal advocates were people "who practiced the same religion" as those who held power. The progressives had to distinguish themselves from the others with highly critical declarations and eventually by verbal attacks on the regime's sacred symbols in order to gain a certain prestige and radical notoriety. In contrast to Poland, we do not have a team of leading personalities who are not integrated into the ruling structures of society and who have not been compromised by their participation in the establishment. If people like Hejdanek, Reichert, Vaclav, Benda, or Havel[10] had been in the front rank, no one would have suspected them of collaborating with the Novotny regime and they would not have needed to distance themselves by indulging in major demonstrations which irritated the Soviets.

The second difference comes from the fact that the Poles have also preserved official organizations which were not completely identified with the regime — organizations which they could and did use, e.g, the Catholic Church. Unfortunately, as a state which comprises several different nationalities and religions, Czechoslovakia is unable to achieve a unity comparable to that of Poland. The only thing which truly brings us together (including, probably, President Husak himself) is our antipathy for the USSR and the Red Army stationed here. And this is a battle cry that cannot be used publicly. Perhaps we could learn from the Poles and prepare ourselves better, at least as well as them, before twelve years have passed and the hour of our revolt arrives. But, secretly, I hope that the general acceleration typical of contemporary history will come into play in this case and that the Polish will contribute to it in great measure. If they are able to keep only half of what they have obtained on paper, that will be sufficient to considerably improve the atmosphere which clouds the Eastern bloc.

Prague, November 1980

9. The respondent is 43 years old and does advanced studies in biology. She has not signed Charter 77.

10. These four people have never belonged to the party. Although they have different political outlooks, they have been, or remain, Charter 77 spokesmen. Benda and Havel are in prison.

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Notes and Commentary:

MAXIMILIEN RUBEL*

by Bruno Bongiovanni

The "Unfinished" Marx

The appearance of Marx's *Oeuvres* has been hailed as a "sign of the times."[1] For some 50 years after his death, Marx had been published by a variety of intellectuals associated with labor parties. University culture had generally neglected the Marxian intellectual legacy, which was viewed as the work of a revolutionary agitator and not as that of a social scientist. Despite the persistently inaccurate and poorly documented critiques that Marx's writings continued to receive from academic circles, this situation changed in the West only after 1945. The "economic" Marx of the *Oeuvres* — the second volume of which appeared only in 1968 — immediately emerged as the most diligent result of a scrupulous Marxological research.

The first volume of the *Oeuvres* had only a limited impact because it was conventionally prefaced by François Perroux and because it contained Marx's so-called economic opus, already published in his own lifetime.[2] This first volume also contains a three-page "Notice" by Rubel, the editor, and a vast "Chronology" along with an impressive display of notes and indices that, given the state of today's *Marx-Forschung*, show high scholarship and compare well with the greatest Marxologist ever, David Borisovic Riazanov, who disappeared under Stalin in the early 1930s, after making major contributions to the reconstruction of the Marx-Engels opus. In the "Notice" Rubel outlines his project: to free Marx's work from the ideological encrustations sedimenting it since the last decades of the 19th century. Rubel emphasizes something everyone knows but which is always forgotten: that is, the incompleteness of Marx's work.[3]

The second volume containing Marx's posthumous "economic" writings is bound to generate considerable discussion. First of all, the volume opens with a 132-page "Introduction" by Rubel.[4] Taking a fresh look at Riazanov's work, Rubel questions

*Translated from the Italian by Eleni Mahaira-Odoni. All titles cited without author are to works by Maximilien Rubel. Literature about Rubel is practically non-existent; cf. Joseph O'Malley's "Introduction" in *Rubel on Marx,* forthcoming from Cambridge University Press, New York. Translated from the Italian by Eleni Mahaira-Odoni.

1. Yvon Bourdet, "A propos d'une édition des oeuvres de Marx," in *L'Homme et la Société*, 17 (1970), p. 310. It refers to Karl Marx, *Oeuvres. Economie I* and *II* (Paris, 1965 and 1968). Cf. also Miguel Abensour, "Pour lire Marx," in *Revue française de science politique*, 4 (1970), pp. 772-788, and the summary by Louis Janover in *Cahiers internationaux de sociologie*, XLVII (1969), pp. 175-177.

2. *The Poverty of Philosophy* (1947), the *Discourse on the Question of Free Exchange* (1848), *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), *Wage Labour and Capital* (1849), the 1857 "Introduction" to the *Critique of Political Economy*, *Toward a Critique of Political Economy* (1859), the *Inaugural Address and Programme of the Workers International Association* (1864), *Wages, Prices and Profit* (1865), Book I of *Capital* (1867), and the *Critique of the Gotha Program*, published only in 1891 by Kautsky's *Neue Zeit* and republished in 1921 by Boris Nikolaevski's *Die Gesellschaft* with editorial censorship over Engels' objections.

3. In the 1857 *Introduction* published posthumously by Kautsky, Marx outlined a gigantic enterprise: 1. Capital; 2. Landed Property; 3. Wage Labor; 4. The State; 5. Foreign Trade; 6. The World Market. In the preface to the 1859 *Critique of Political Economy*, Marx admits to having omitted an *Introduction* not for any lack of words but, as Rubel notes, because it anticipated results yet to come. Of this project Marx managed only to complete a small part and, aside from the 1859 *Critique*, only the first part of the planned six sections appeared during his lifetime. Thus, according to Rubel, we only have a fragment that, through the work of Marx's successors, became a system.

4. The volume also contains the 1844 *Manuscripts* whose original, like many others, can be

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the "official" version of Marx's posthumous writings as presented by Engels' publication of the second and third volumes of *Capital* (1885 and 1894) and Kautsky's edition of the fourth volume (1905-1910), also known as *Theories of Surplus Value* (republished in a revised edition in 1956 by the Berlin and Moscow Institutes of Marxism-Leninism). Engels' edition of the second volume of *Capital* contains only 13 instead of 21 chapters and the third volume 28 chapters instead of 52: manuscript passages retracing the 1859 *Critique* and the first volume of *Capital* were eliminated, while some variants of Engels' choice were replaced by others found more significant.

Rubel does not claim to have provided a definitive edition of *Economics*, partly because there were too many things missing at the time of the *Oeuvres* publication as a result of the Moscow Marx-Lenin Institute's secrecy rules in cultural policy (in particular, the 23 notebooks of 1861-63). According to Rubel, Engels did both too much and too little: too much since, although careful[5] he presented Marx's work as complete, thus contributing to the creation and legitimation of "Marxism"; he also did too little by neglecting a great many manuscripts that were published only after the "Marxist" system had already been constructed. Thus, as new manuscripts were published, commentators earnestly sought to insert them into the already existing system: fresh parts were used in support of internal diatribes between "determinists" and "voluntarists," "subjective humanists" and "objectivist materialists," etc. Thus, the publication of previously unpublished texts did not encourage a return to Marx but rather their integration into "Marxism."

In contrast, the publication of Marx's two *Oeuvres* volumes dedicated to *Economics* constitutes a real return to Marx. In his "Introduction," Rubel once again runs through the history of the critique of political economy. After an initial liberal phase, Marx's intellectual career developed from the vantage point of a critique of politics and of the State, as can be seen from the 1843 Kreuznach meditation[6] — a critique that, together with the "Jewish Question," was to become an anarchist and proletarian manifesto.[7] Marx's first economic lectures originate from a trauma that was to last a lifetime: from it sprang the foundations of *De la Misère des Classes Laborieuses en Angleterre et en France* (1840) by the Christian Eugène Buret, Proudhon's *What Is Property?* (1840), and the *Outline of a Critique of Political Economy* (1844) — young Engels' ingenious work. It was during this period that Marx developed a theoretical obsession whose first results came with the *1844 Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*. Yet, according to Rubel, Marx never abandoned the project of writing a

found in Amsterdam but whose first publication in MEGA goes back to 1932; there is also the manuscript on *Wages* (1847), first published by Riazanov in *Unter dem Banner des Marxismus,* excerpts from the *Grundrisse* (1857-58), never mentioned by Engels and first described by Riazanov in a Nov. 20, 1923 letter to the Moscow socialist academy and, finally, the "Materials for the *Economy*" (1861-65), "Materials for the Second Volume of *Capital*" (1869-79), and for the third volume of *Capital* (1864-75).

5. Cf. Engels, Preface to K. Marx, *Capitale*, Vol. III (Rome, 1965), pp. 9-28. For a negative view on Rubel's edition and in defense of pro-Engels conservatism, see Gilbert Badia, "Brèves Remarques sur le Tome II des Oeuvres de Marx," *L'Homme et la Société*, 17 (1970), pp. 319-323. For a more guarded opinion, cf. Jacques Camatte, *Il Capitale Totale* (Bari, 1976), pp. 16-18.

6. This is how Rubel calls the "Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right." Cf. Marx-Engels, *Opere*, Vol. III (Rome, 1976), pp. 5-143, written in Kreuznach, probably in August 1843, just after Marx married Jenny von Westphalen. For a different view, see Pierre Vilar, "Marx e la Storia," in *Storia del Marxismo*, Vol. I (Turin, 1978), p. 65, who considers this text a step backward with respect to the previous year.

7. See "Introduction" to Karl Marx, *Oeuvres: Economie II, op.cit.*, pp. xlv-lii.

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critique of politics and of the State,[8] but, following the exposition of the materialist conception of history (*The German Ideology*, 1845-46), he began to see in production the departure point for all further analyses. From then on Marx had to come to terms with Proudhon who had initiated him into the critique of political economy but who insisted on analyzing capital from the viewpoint of capital, and poverty from the viewpoint of poverty.

Rubel challenges the claim that Marx changed his mind[9] and that *Capital* contains what was envisaged in the original project. According to Rubel, Marx never gave up on the colossal work he had outlined. *Capital*, however, took him a lot of time to write. Add to this his journalistic activities, illnesses and a devouring passion for study, etc.,[10] and one begins to understand why Marx could only finish a small part of the immense work he had planned. Regarding the critique of political economy and of the State, we will just have to content ourselves with the early works written prior to the elaboration of the materialist conception of history (Marx never spoke of "historical materialism," much less of "dialectical materialism" — the backbone of *Diamat*). In any case, Rubel is convinced that in the fourth part of his projected and never finished critique of the State, Marx would have resumed and developed the 1843-44 themes by reworking the profoundly libertarian and communist themes of political alienation.

In 1965 in France, Althusser published *Pour Marx* and *Lire le "Capital,"* which developed the much too celebrated concept of *epistemological coupure*. The objective was to deprive Marxism of Marx's early work and to make *Capital* into a finished and homogeneous book — the bible of a system expounded once and for all: "Marxism." In a short note, Rubel observes ironically that Althusser is only half right: not just the early Marx, but Marx as a whole is foreign to "Marxism."[11] Yet, while Althusser's works have enjoyed a wide circulation, Rubel's work has remained practically unknown.

Marxian Ethics and the Road to Collapse

Rubel was born Oct. 10, 1905, in Czernowitz, Bukovina (part of the Austro-Hungarian empire), which became part of Romania in 1918 (Cernauti) and which is today part of Russia (Cernovcy). After finishing school in Vienna and Cernouti, where he received degrees in law and philosophy, Rubel went to Paris, where between 1931 and 1934 he devoted himself to German studies and in 1934 received a degree in literature from the Sorbonne. In 1937 he became a French citizen, he was mobilized in the 1939-40 *drôle de guerre* and served in transports and sanitary services. In 1945-47 he was a private teacher of German, law and philosophy, and his

8. On Feb. 3, 1845, Marx signed a contract with Leske, a Darmstadt publisher, for publishing a two-volume work — never delivered — entitled *Critique of Politics and of Political Economy*.

9. Cf. Henryk Grossman, "Die Aenderung des ursprünglichen Aufbauplans des Marxschen Kapital und ihre Ursachen," in *Archiv für die Geschichte des Sozialismus und der Arbeiterbewegung*, XIV (1929), pp. 305-338. For a view between Grossman and Rubel, cf. Roman Rosdolsky, *Genesi e struttura del Capitale* (Bari, 1971). For the development of views by Eastern scholars, cf. Wolfgang Jahn, Roland Nietzold, "Probleme der Entwicklung der Marxschen politischen Oekonomie im Zeitraum von 1850 bis 1863,"in *Marx-Engels Jahrbuch*, Vol. I (Berlin, 1978), pp. 145-174.

10. Marx accumulated statistics, grappled with the Russian question and started to learn Russian, followed great international events with keen interest and was fascinated with natural history and the first advances of Darwinism. He delved competently into anthropology and ethnology and also made himself part of the history of the international workers' movement.

11. Cf. Introduction to Karl Marx, *Oeuvres, Economie, op.cit.*, pp. lxii-lxiii.

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first Marxist publications came in 1947-48. In 1947 he became *attaché de recherche* at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, in 1954 he was professor of literature and *chargé de recherche* at CNRS and in 1959 he was made *maître de recherche*. in 1957 he also became director of *Etudes de Marxologie* and in following years he taught at various French, American and German universities. As already mentioned, Rubel's activity as a "Marxologist" began in 1947. In the *Revue Socialiste* he presented "Un inédit de Karl Marx: Le travail aliéné," which is simply a chapter from the 1844 *Manuscripts* of which in France there existed at the time only a partial translation in volume VI of the *Oeuvres Philosophiques de Karl Marx* (Paris, 1937). Rubel wrote that the work of the early Marx was imbued with a deep ethical spirit that remains valid at a time when free workers are transformed into State slaves and of individual capitalists into bureaucrats or technocrats.

The previous issue of the 1947 *Revue Socialiste* had published an article by Leon Blum entitled "Révolution Socialiste ou Révolution Directoriale?"[12] — a socialist response to Burnham's theses in *The Managerial Revolution* — a book that was an unfortunate plagiarism of an obscure Italian text by Bruno Rizzi.[13] In it, Burnham denied that the decline of capitalism would lead to socialism. He argued that in its place would arise a totalitarian-bureaucratic regime whose leading class would be (as already in Soviet Russia, Nazi Germany and America under the New Deal) managers and directors of public and private enterprises. Instead of the proletariat, these were the people destined to become the real gravediggers of capitalism and of the bourgeoisie. Blum was frightened by Burnham's terrifying hypothesis but provided a social democratic response in the same way that Leon Trotsky, at the dawn of World War II, had reacted to Rizzi's theses.[14] Blum wrote that even though "managerial" societies are likely to emerge during a transition period, they would eventually move toward socialism "by some sort of democratic attraction." According to Blum, it is even possible that in the Soviet Union itself, which Burnham saw as the model for future regimes, this transition had probably already started. Apparently, Burnham's theses aroused great interest within French socialist circles![15]

In another essay of the same 1947 *Revue Socialiste*, Rubel reported and commented on the theoretical limits of the correspondence between Karl Marx and Vera Zasulich published by Riazanov in the 1928 *Marx-Engels Archives*[16] and in the same year, Rubel also published part of his introduction to Marx's anthology *Pages Choisies pour une Ethique Socialiste*, which appeared in 1948 and was reprinted with few changes in 1970. The first paragraph of the essay is entitled "Socialisme ou Barbarie." If one recalls that Claude Lefort's essay "La Contradiction de Trotsky" appeared

12. Blum's text was also the introduction to the French translation of James Burnham, *The Managerial Revolution*, and several other pieces. Therefore, it had a wide circulation.

13. For the denunciation of the plagiarism in France, see Pierre Naville's letter to the editors of *Le Contrat Social*, now in Bruno Rizzi, *Il Collettivismo Burocratico* (Imola, 1967), pp. 119-121; on the theoretical terms of this event, see Bruno Bongiovanni, *L'Antistalinismo di Sinistra e la Natura Sociale del'URSS* (Milan, 1975), pp. 259-269.

14. See Leon Trotsky, *In Defense of Marxism* (Rome, 1969). On this theme see also Bruno Bongiovanni, "Il Destino della Burocrazie e la Dissoluzione del Trockismo," in *An Archos*, 3 (1979), pp. 221-239.

15. See P.L. Tomori (pseudonym of the Sinologist Etienne Balasz), "Qui Succedera au Capitalisme?" in *Cahiers de Spartacus* (Paris, 1947). Of equally high quality is also the level of writers of the *Revue Socialiste* at the end of the 1940s, among whom, in addition to Blum and Rubel, one finds Dommanget, Bourget, Silone, Schwartz, Goldmann, Léopold Senghor, Rimbert, Dolléans, *et al.*

16. "Karl Marx et le Socialisme Populiste Russe," in *Revue Socialiste*, 11.

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intermittently in *Les Temps Modernes* between 1948-1949,[17] one realizes to what degree Rubel's early works had circulated among those refuting Bolshevik (and even Trotskyist) ideology and "Marxism" as state ideology and party dogma![18] The fundamental problem in this "Introduction" is seen as the relation between science and action: between Bernstein's "revisionism" and Sorel's and Labriola's "voluntarism."[19] According to Rubel, Luxemburg reconciled economic determinism and spontaneity by reintroducing the Marxian theory of the collapse as the road to barbarism. Capitalism's inherent tendency for collapse (including the collapse of all values) could lead either to socialism or to barbarism, if proletarians of all countries did not rise in an ethico-revolutionary spontaneous effort. For Rubel, this was crucial, for, in the second instance, it would become possible for totalitarian barbarism of a managerial variety to come about. If, instead, a Marxian ethics of revolutionary action were to develop along with the capitalist collapse, Luxemburg's positive alternative would win out. This would entail workers' self-emancipation and the rise of socialism. Dealing with the party, Rubel reproduces some fascinating passages from the Marx-Freiligrath correspondence, where Marx distinguishes between the formal party — one that is from time to time embodied in visible institutions and which arises directly from social conflicts — and the historical party, "the invisible party of real knowledge,"[20] i.e., the alliance of science and the proletariat.

After some other articles in the *Revue Socialiste* in 1951,[21] Rubel participated directly in the drawn-out debate concerning the Burnham thesis.[22] He discussed the sociological and economic literature contained in Burnham's work (Veblen, Rathenau, Berle and Means) and contrasted it with the Marxian positions of Bernstein, Renner, Cunow, Hilferding and Horkheimer. Rubel saw a similarity between Burnham's thesis and Renner's self-socialization of capital as well as Kautsky's theory on the protean character of the State and concluded that an anti-Marxist like Burnham, who entertained the possibility of a catastrophic way out, could well be more faithful to Marx than many other Marxists (apparently, Rubel did not know that Burnham had plagiarized his thesis from a Marxist). According to Rubel, contemporary events throw new light on the Marxian doctrine of the social collapse along lines that both the "orthodoxy" and the "revisionists" were unable to predict. In October of the same year, Rubel was forced to polemicize with the socialist Robert Mossé, who wrote that Marxian theory should be rejected wholesale on the basis of its effects in Russia.[23] Rubel maintained that: (1) There is no Marxist theory

17. Cf. Claude Lefort, *Elements pour une Critique de la Bureaucratie* (Geneva, 1971), pp. 11-29.

18. For the views of the group with the same name *before* the founding of the *Socialisme ou Barbarie* review, see C. Castoriadis, *Capitalisme Moderne et Revolution*, Vol. I (Paris, 1979), pp. 11-216.

19. In strangely similar terms, this problem is examined by Amadeo Bordiga in "False Risorse dell'Attivismo," in *Sul Filo del Tempo*, 1 (1953), pp. 23-27. Bordiga, however, flattens Rubel's dualism into a rigid and monolithic monism.

20. "Introduction" to *Pages de Karl Marx pour une Ethique Socialiste* (Paris, 1970), p. 45. This concept was re-examined in the 1960s by Jacques Camatte, *Verso la Comunità Amana* (Milan, 1978), pp. 43ff.

21. Cf. "La Pensée Maîtresse du Manifeste Communiste," in *Revue Socialiste*, 17-18 (1948); "Fragments d'un Journal de Voyage de Friedrich Engels," 27 (1949); "Echange de Lettres entre Lassalle et Marx," 32 (1949); "La Russie dans l'Oeuvre de Marx et d'Engels," 36 (1950).

22. Cf. "Réflexions sur la Société Diréctoriale," in *Revue Socialiste*, 44 (1951).

23. Cf. "Socialisme et Marxisme (Brève Réponse à Robert Mossé)," in *Revue Socialiste*, 5& (1951).

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of value; in Marx there is only a critique of the classic theories of value; (2) The antagonistic dualism of classes is not an eternal and omnipresent reality but expresses only the simple historical tendency of capitalist societies; (3) For Marx, the materialist conception of history was neither a philosophy nor a science, but only a way of approaching the study of society.[24]

Bibliography between Utopia and Science

There is nothing novel about describing the ideological-cultural climate of the 1950s as a split between McCarthyist hysteria and dejected Stalinist oppression. There are few documents testifying to independence of mind in view of this climate, especially with regard to Marxological studies and the development of socialist theory. In 1954, the first volume of *Marxismusstudien* appeared in Germany, in France, there were *Socialism ou Barbarie* (1949-65), sustained by Castoriadis and Lefort, and *Arguments*, a journal in which Rubel also wrote.[25] Given the idolatry of Marxism-Leninism understood as a system embodying power and represented as absolute truth, and given the uncompromising rejection of any socialist hypothesis in the name of an uncritical defense of the "free world," there was a need for a return to a critical Marxian discourse. But what was the status of such discourse? It may seem paradoxical, yet, despite an impressive amount of publications, and at a time when "Marxism" — obligatory State doctrine for an enormous number of people — has been established as the dominant 20th-century ideology, little is really known about it.

Before 1956 there was no one to publish the complete works of Marx and Engels: between 1956 and 1968 the 41 volumes of *Marx-Engels Werk* (MEW) were published in East Berlin.[26] This edition is incomplete and full of gaps. Before 1956, however, even that was not available. These *Werk*, which today are an exclusive source of reference, can be seen as the result of liberalization during the Khrushchev years. Of

24. In the early 1950s, still in *Revue Socialiste* and in *Preuves*, Rubel dedicated some polemical essays on the modality of Marx and Engels publications in Stalinist Russia. Specifically, he dealt with the censorship imposed by chauvinist Stalinism upon Marx's *Revelations on the Secret Diplomatic History of the 18th Century* and Engels' *The Foreign Policy of the Czars*. Cf. "Fr. Engels et le Socialisme Messianique Russe," in *Revue Socialiste*, 51 (1951); "Le Sort de l'Oeuvre de Marx et d'Engels en U.R.S.S.," 56 (1952); "L'Occident doit à Marx et à Engels une Edition Monumentale de leurs Oeuvres," 59 (1952); "Staline et Cie devant le Verdict d'Engels," 63 (1953); "Karl Marx Auteur Maudit en U.R.S.S.? L'Edition Fantôme," in *Preuves*, 7 (1951); "L'Edition Censurée," 8 (1951); "Staline Jugé par Marx," 12 (1952).

25. "Dix Thèses sur le Marxisme Aujourd'hui par Karl Korsch," now in *Marxisme, Révisionnisme, Méta-Marxisme. Arguments 2* (Paris, 1976), pp. 17-24; "De Marx au Bolchévisme; Partis et Conseils," in *Révolution Classe Parti. Arguments 4* (Paris, 1978), pp. 11-29. The themes of these theoretical efforts were the critique of bureaucracy and totalitarianism, free research in light of the classics (read: free from the liturgical apparatus of Stalinist obscurantism) on the issues of reform and revolution, party and class, the councils, the development of modern capitalism, the socio-historical physiognomy of classes, technology and the intellectuals.

26. As is well known, Dietz publishers has started on a new, 100-volume series of the MEGA, beginning in the mid-1970s. Of great importance, among the 10 volumes published by 1979, are Vol. III, tome I, sect. II, containing the first original edition of the first five notebooks of a manuscript edited by Marx in August 1861 and July 1863. For a brief appraisal of the first six volumes, see Rubel's "La nouvelle MEGA," in *Etudes de Marxologie, 19-20* (1978), pp. 559-562. Cf. also Hannes Skambraks, "Ueber Marx' grösstes Manuskript gebeugt. Zur wissenschaftlich-editorischen Arbeit am Manuskript *Zur Kritik der politischen Oekonomie* von Marx aus den Jahren 1861 bis 1863 für die MEGA," in *Marx-Engels Jahrbuch 2* (Berlin, 1979), pp. 201-217.

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course, it is impossible here to outline the history of Marx-Engels editions.[27] Engels had already thought about a *Gesamtausgabe* (complete collection), but after his death the prospect grew dim because of a large number of successors, often in conflict with each other: Eleanor Marx, Kautsky, Bernstein, Bebel, Mehring, etc.[28] Only after 1917 did this prospect become more concrete when many fragments of this large mosaic were published, somewhat disjointedly, by SPD circles. Russia even had the right person, Riazanov, already devoted to the study of Marx-Engels texts entrusted to German social democrats. Lenin helped Riazanov safely bring to the Moscow Marx-Lenin archives photocopies and originals of texts constituting the colossal Marx-Engels intellectual legacy hitherto dispersed in German social-democratic archives, and public and private libraries in Europe and in the United States. Riazanov completed this enormous work in very little time with the active and valuable collaboration of many SPD supporters at a time when relations between the SPD (unified with part of the USPD after the Halle Congress) and the Soviet CP(b) were not exactly cordial. The Moscow Institute and the German *Gesellschaft für Sozial-Forschung* founded two publishing firms in Berlin and Frankfurt. But in 1930, the year the Stalinist campaign reached its apex against "social fascists," this already weak collaboration had to be cut short.[29] The following year, accused of collaborating with social democrats and Mensheviks,[30] Riazanov was fired from his job of institute director, expelled from the party and forced to disappear. In the meantime, however, Riazanov had started on the vast enterprise known as MEGA, projected in 40 volumes to be divided into three sections: (1) philosophical, economic, historical and political works except *Capital*; (2) *Capital* in a variety of versions and with all unpublished manuscripts; (3) the complete correspondence. In 1930, Riazanov published only five volumes and some other texts in two issues of the *Marx-Engels Archiv*, the most conspicuous in size being Engels' *Dialectics of Nature*. Another seven volumes were published by his successor Adoratsky until, in 1935, the MEGA was abruptly interrupted with the complete Marx-Engels works going only up to 1848-49.[31] Only a Russian edition was resumed, discontinuous, incomplete, and lacking the rigor of the enterprise's original founder.

In the early 1950s the situation was unchanged and actually worsened. The 1933 publication of "Resultate des unmittelbaren Produktionsprozesses" (the "unpublished chapter VI") by *Archiv Marksa i Engelsa* and of the *Grundrisse* in 1939-41 produced only a feeble echo and, for many, "Marxism" was a finished system entrusted to the

27. For discussions of this problem, see Eric Hobsbawm, "La Fortuna delle Edizioni di Marx ed Engels," in *Storia del Marxismo*, Vol. I, *op.cit.*, pp. 357-374. For an evaluation of *Storia del Marxismo*, see Gian Mario Bravo, "Una Storia del Marxismo, Oggi" in *Studi Storici*, 2 (1979), pp. 317-337.

28. The Bernstein debate, i.e., the polemics between orthodox Marxists and revisionists, caused serious publication and circulation delays.

29. On these events, cf. F. Schiller, "Das Marx-Engels Institut in Moskau," in *Archiv für die Geschichte des Sozialismus und der Arbeiterbewegung*, XV (1927), pp. 416-435, and especially Paul Meyer, "Die Geschichte des Sozialdemokratischen Parteiarchivs und das Schicksal des Marx-Engels-Nachlasses," in *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*, VI-VII (1966-67), pp. 5-198.

30. In 1931 there was a kangaroo trial against alleged Mensheviks; see Simon Wolin, "The 'Menshevik' Trial of 1931," in Leopold H. Haimson, ed., *The Mensheviks* (Chicago, 1974), pp. 394-402. Cf. also on Riazanov, E. Czobel, "Riazanov als Marx-forscher," in *Unter dem Banner des Marxismus*, IV:3 (1930), pp. 401-417.

31. The 1927-1935 volumes of the old MEGA have been reissued by Verlag Detlev Auverman (Glashutten im Taunus, 1970).

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hands of the party or, at best, contained in the *Manifesto* and *Capital*. Naturally, many were unhappy with this situation but the interruption of the great MEGA and the confusion of headings following the "scientific" and political rupture between social democracy and Stalinist Bolshevism offered no help toward a critical understanding of events. Above all, there was no dated, scrupulous inventory of Marx's intellectual legacy. The only thing available at the time was Ernst Drahn's old bibliography, abridged and abbreviated and put together according to questionable criteria.[32] Having completed the first phase of his work, Rubel in 1956 turned to the presses the first scientifically prepared bibliography of Marx's work with an appendix listing also Engels' works.[33] From then on the *Marx-Forschung* began to grow free of party diatribes and ideological prejudices. Only by exhibiting the complexity and richness of Marx's polymorphous legacy is it possible to leave behind the perennial temptation to use that legacy as an *instrumentum regni*.

Parallel to the bibliography was the outline of a Marx intellectual biography published in 1957. It takes up again the themes from the 1948 anthology and elaborates the dualism between revolutionary ethics and critical sociology for which he was criticized by reviewers.[35] Here there are some similarities with Korsch, with whom Rubel was corresponding during the 1950s.[36] In any case, Marx's early works take up considerable space in the bibliography, testifying to the anti-Hegelian and anti-statist protest in the name of concrete society. For Rubel, this protest is in harmony with Kierkegaard's anti-Hegelianism invoked in the name of the concrete individual. Rubel emphasized the influence of Spinoza's ethics on Marx,[37] his passage from liberalism to communism, the critique of bureaucracy understood as an elite of esoteric knowledge, the transition from the analysis of religion to politics through Feuerbach's mediation, and the critique of political emancipation in the name of human emancipation. According to Rubel, for Marx *critique* becomes the *par excellence* theoretical instrument for articulating, on the level of consciousness and knowledge, the ethical and revolutionary project of abandoning the old world. The materialist conception of history following the critique of politics provided Marx with a research method that Rubel defines as critical or paragmatic sociology — a rather unfortunate expression probably meant to underline Marx's debt *vis-à-vis* Saint-Simon. Initially, Marx had sided with Saint-Simonian proletarian ethics in support of the "poorest and largest class." Later, however, he disclaimed the elitist character of Saint-Simonism in order to locate the proletariat's own external consciousness in a class outside the proletariat. Marx owes his idea of the proletariat's self-liberation to Flora Tristan.[38] From this follows the rejection of all party or state centralism expropriating the dynamic

32. Cf. Ernst Drahn, *Marx-Bibliographie. Ein Lebensbild Karl Marx' in biographisch-bibliographischen Daten* (Charlottenburg, 1920). Slieger of London has reprinted this text.

33. Cf. *Bibliographie des oeuvres de Karl Marx* (Paris, 1956). The bibliography is in four parts: the first one includes works and publications during Marx's life; the second correspondence; the third, unpublished manuscripts; the fourth, questionable works or works of uncertain authorship. Cf. *Supplement à la Bibliographie des oeuvres de Karl Marx* (Paris, 1960).

34. Cf. *Karl Marx. Essai de Biographie Intellectuelle* (Paris, 1957).

35. Among others, see Lucien Goldmann, "Propos Dialectique: Y a-t-il une Sociologie Marxiste?" *Les Temps Modernes,* Oct. 1957. Rubel's response followed in the December issue.

36. Cf. Karl Korsch, *Karl Marx* (New York, 1936); also "Ueber Karl Korsch" in *Jahrbuch Arbeiterbewegung,* Vol. I (Frankfurt, 1973).

37. In 1841 Marx entered in a notebook about 160 passages from Spinoza's *Tractatus Theologico-politicus*.

38. Cf. "Karl Marx et Flora Tristan," in *La Nef,* Jan. 1946.

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autonomy of a class that can and must be both the subject and object of emancipation. At this time Marx introduced the theme of *Gemeinwesen*, of man's communal being (*das kommunistische Wesen*) concerning which Rubel says that, in some passages, instead of *Gemeinwesen,* Marx had first written *die Kommune* — a term he later erased. This was the starting point of reflection on communism, which is not only the conclusive approach to economic-quantitative development but is the real being of man exiled in a civil society separate from and oppressed by the State, atomized and parcelled out, framed in and bureaucratized.[39] Like critical sociology and political economy, the materialist conception of history is a method for analyzing social obstacles that stifle *Gemeinwesen* and impede its free affirmation. *Gemeinwesen* is the essence of communism: what makes possible its realization. In turn, communism is the real movement that gives free rise to *Gemeinwesen*; it is that social action which leaves the much-too-long prehistory of humanity clearly behind.

Bonapartism and Stalinism

In 1917 Riazanov had published in Stuttgart Marx's main journalistic writings from the 1852 to 1856 period.[40] According to the initial plan, publication would continue to include writings from 1856 to 1862. The Russian revolution and Riazanov's return to his country and to the Bolshevik ranks interrupted the project. Next, Riazanov started planning the MEGA which would naturally include Marxian writings left previously unpublished. As already seen, Riazanov's activities and the MEGA were often abruptly interrupted. Thus, during the 1950s, Marx's lesser known writings were precisely those of the decade on which Riazanov had worked before February 1917, among which the *New York Daily Tribune* articles stand out for both quality and variety. Faced with this situation, Rubel in 1960 published an essay on Marx's position on Bonapartism[41] in order to deal with the themes of the period in question (starting mainly with 1856, the year when Riazanov's publishing stops) and because the analysis of the Bonapartist power system, though dispersed in the inevitably diffused fine dust of journalistic accounts, is central to understanding the continuity of the critique of politics in Marx's thought.[42]

The special interest caused by Bonapartism, however, stems from the fact that Marx identified it as the moment of supreme antagonism between the state and civil society. Bonapartism is not so much the executive committee of the bourgeoisie or the way a ruling class expresses itself. It is a particular political phenomenon through which one can see at its apex the abstraction of the State from civil society. Marx defined the Bonapartist State as the war machine of capitalism against labor but, in apparent contradiction to this view, he also maintains that the class best represented by such a

39. Cf. *Karl Marx. Essai d'une Biographie Intellectuelle, op.cit.*, p. 67. This theme too has been discussed by Jacques Camatte in *Il Capitale Totale* and in *Verso la Comunità Umana.*

40. Cf. *Gesammelte Schriften von Karl Marx und Friedrich Engels 1852-1862* (Stuttgart, 1917).

41. *Karl Marx devant le Bonapartisme* (Paris, 1960).

42. In this study (which runs through Marx's writings beyond Riazanov's pre-1917 edition to the collapse of the 2nd Empire and the Commune), Rubel deals with the Marxian interpretation of the evolution of French history, the comparison of Napoleon I and III and the appraisals of the Crimean war and the European system of alliances with all the related problems of diplomatic history, on the Praetorian regime and the imperial-military "socialism" of Bonaparte *minor*, on Franco-Russian relations and the affinity between Bonapartism and tsarism (the latter being the model of all integral despotism), on the Mexican adventures and on the fatal Franco-Prussian war.

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State is the peasant class (hence the ex-liberal's good relations with the *parti prêtre*) which is therefore guilty of the swindles of monied aristocracy and of the parasitism of strata gravitating directly around the crown. If, on the one hand, Marx claimed that parliamentary regimes can contain the germs of the Bonapartist State (and this has served for a Marxian interpretation of contemporary fascism),[43] on the other hand, the Bonapartist State seems to strengthen those instruments of control and domination over civil society in ways that they cannot be made part of a permanently valid definition of class. Just as capital, freed from the fetters of bourgeois private property in the modern forms described by Marx, tends to become *capital sans phrases* (plain capital), similarly, according to Rubel, it seems that starting with Bonapartism it is possible to speak of a State *sans phrases,* where the ruling class is progressively confused with the State apparatus until the bureaucratic machine of domination, inherited from the past and made ready for the future, emerges in full and regulates all political and social organisms. For Rubel, Bonapartism, so very lucidly analyzed by Marx, is the destiny of the modern world. Under the sign of Bonapartism, understood both as totalitarian oppression and as demagogic State populism that brings off revolutions from above, great national entities and large industrial systems were formed or, better still, those macrohistorical phenomena parallel to the rise of large urban proletarian masses have led to structures of domination that have much in common with Minor's still primitive and inefficient "Bonapartism."[44]

It is impossible to continue with a concise analysis of Marx's writings without eventually posing the problem of the social nature of that State and society that officially identifies with Marx's thought — the Soviet Union. In 1957 and in following years,[45] Rubel started thinking along lines fully compatible with the results of his Marxological studies. According to Rubel, with reference to Soviet Russia, Lenin spoke of State capitalism monitored and directed by labor power — a power identified with the Bolshevik party as the "external" consciousness of the class and the only instrument of proletarian dictatorship. Therefore, by the admission of its greatest founder, the Russian revolution, after an initial period when the Soviets expressed the anti-capitalist will of large strata of workers, saw the adoption of methods and systems illustrative of the tendency of capitalism to assume as homogeneous and intensive a structure as possible. But, according to Rubel, the socialist aspect of the revolution, the proletarian nature of political power, is nothing but a myth. In 1917 Bolshevism used Marx's thought to force the scant masses of workers and those larger ones of later decades to accept a much faster and more violent road to capital accumulation than that of the industrial revolution in the West. For Rubel, in some prophetic pages Marx had prefigured a capitalist State as the pure state developed in Soviet society, which made a virtue out of necessity and managed to start a large-scale process of capital accumulation without recourse to the traditional auspices of the bourgeoisie. Marx had studied social conditions in Russia, had taken interest in its communal institutions and had ventured that through their strength and aided by the success of the revolution in the West, Russia might be fortunate enough to pass to socialism without necessarily crossing the intermediary capitalist purgatory. Yet, by the last years of his

43. Cf. August Thalheimer, "On Fascism," in *Telos*, 40 (Summer 1979), pp. 109-122.
44. Cf. "Karl Marx devant le Bonapartisme," *op.cikt.*, p. 160.
45. Cf. "La croissance du Capital en U.R.S.S." (1957), "The Relationship of Bolshevism to Marxism" (1968), "La Fonction Historique de la Nouvelle Bourgeoisie" (1971), "La Société de Transition" (1972), "Le Chainon le plus Faible" (1973); all these texts are now in *Marx, critique du Marxisme* (Paris, 1974), pp. 63-168.

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life, this possibility seemed already remote to him. It appeared even more remote to Engels in the years following Marx's death. At any rate, the Russian revolution would have had to be of a constitutional-democratic type: if we abide by Engels' last letter, there is no doubt that the Menshevik hypothesis was "orthodox" and the Bolshevik "revisionist."[46] For Rubel, Bolshevism changed the Jacobin role of a bourgeoisie unable to confront its historical task, without liberalism and in the absence of a constitutional-democratic regime by calling, in "Marxist" ideological terminology, "socialist accumulation" what was only the usual brutal process of capitalist accumulation. Marx's studies on the historical genesis and growth of capitalism were transformed into economic recipes for the building of socialism — especially with the rise of Stalin. This is how the Soviet State, a capitalist imitation regarding the technological materials used, utilized within a very brief time all the accumulation methods described by Marx. In this way the Soviet Union, through party dictatorship, drew closer to the realization of capital pure and simple, free of the bourgeois obstacles, as described by Marx. Its theocratic State, founded on a dual ideological and political terror, has developed to perfection that State *sans phrases* that Rubel located in Marx's analysis of Bonapartism.

Clearly, there is a return here to the themes of the immediate post-war period. Rubel speaks of "managerial capitalism" regarding Russia and notes that the third volume of *Capital* has Marx using the term "managers," which was later modified by Engels.[47] Unlike the theoretician of bureaucratic collectivism,[48] and closer to Castoriadis' analysis in *Socialisme et Barbarie*, Rubel does not maintain that Russia could have overcome the capitalist stage to stabilize into a mode of production of a new type, unforeseen by Marx and buttressed by the oppression of a new techno-bureaucratic class and by politico-economic totalitarianism. With Lenin, and even more so with Stalin, the proletariat was not abolished. Instead, it was created. The division of labor became deeper, the State was perfected in its instruments of control and oppression, monetary exchange became the main incentive for any type of work at the national market level, and the social and professional hierarchy became the very backbone of the new society.[49] The Soviet Union did not realize Marx's hopes and, according to Rubel, it did not escape the intermediary capitalist stage. Moreover, it did not even realize the Mensheviks' slimmest hopes and has not, nor is it in the process of, crossing the stormy capitalist river at the heart of a democratic-constitutional system.

The Journal Etudes de Marxologie

In 1959, thanks to Rubel's initiative, a new journal appeared, more or less on the verge of dying out every year (between 1959 and 1978 there were only 20 issues), which set out to deal with themes central to its research: the title, *Etudes de Marxologie*, says it all. It proposed to throw light on the genesis of Marxism, offer documents and

46. Cf. Bruno Bongiovanni, "Introduzione" to F. Engels, *La Politica Estera degli Zar* (Milan, 1978), pp. 9-35.

47. Cf. Karl Marx, *Il Capitale. Libro III, op.cit.*, p. 460; *Oeuvres Economie II, op.cit.*, pp. 1147-1150, 1175, 1792.

48. Among them Rizzi, Burnham, and Shactman. Two others with entirely similar positions were Rudolf Hilferding on the socialist democratic side and Victor Serge on the libertarian side.

49. Rubel recognizes he is not the only one to define the USSR as a capitalist state. In this respect he also cites Pannekoek, Rühle, Bordiga, Cliff, Castoriadis. Cf. *Marx Critique du Marxisme, op.cit.*, p. 92.

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testimonies, studies and analyses of Marx and Marxism together with historical reviews, bibliographies and unpublished translations. Today, these 20 issues are an indispensable tool for anyone wishing to dig deep into Marxological problems. In the "Foreward" to No. 3, Rubel stated that "Marxology" does not adequately translate the more elegant German *Marx-Forschung*, but he believes that Latin languages should also find a proper term, not in order to found a discipline like "Marxists" claim to have done, but in order to delimit an undoubtedly enormous research area: the enormous legacy of Marx's thought, his practical involvement in organizations and institutions, his many epigones and, at the same time, the history of interruptions in publishing his works, the lack of a reliable edition of his complete works and the abysmal ideological distance among "Marxist" schools. All of this calls for the existence of Marxology — a research area where scholars will have to fashion themselves as philologists, historians, economists, sociologists, etc. *Marx-Forschung* has found a safe place in the entire history of world culture of the last 50 years. Neither anti-Marxists who deny any validity or topicality to Marx's thought, nor "Marxists" who consider the doctrine and system closed and largely believe that socialism exists or, at least, is on its way in this or that part of the planet — none of them can avoid Marxological research, even if they could through tacit accord, censor embarrassing passages or mummify and transform Marx's work into sterile scholasticism. In the "Foreword" to No. 5, Rubel asserts that the first step of *Marx-Forschung* should be the removal of the religious aura superimposed on the master's work and the refutation of "Marxism" as State ideology and party dogma.

Meanwhile, *Etudes de Marxologie* translated or presented texts often quite unknown, in France at least, by Marx and Engels, but also by Sorel and Struve, together with essays by scholars like Draper, Pipes, Mattick, Na'aman, on fundamental issues such as the dictatorship of the proletariat, the cooperative movement, utopia, the history of the labor movement, the Italian *Risorgimento*, the impact of "Marxism" in various countries and-or the Marxian and Lassallean interpretation of the French revolution. The journal also published writings by Korsch and Rosdolsky, and pieces on the Jewish question and the Hegel-Marx relation in the light of the eternal question of the dialectic. Of crucial importance is issue No. 8, on the centennial of the First International, with Rubel's excellent chronology on Marx and the First International, also carried over to the next issue. Of equal importance are issues 11 (1967) on the *Capital* centennary and especially the 1969 issue concerning Marx's and Engels' writings (partly unpublished in France) on tsarism and the Russian Commune.[50] The 1970 issue dedicated to communism brings out the utopian origins of Marx's thought. Its object is to show that communism later degenerated into mythology through the mediation of the ideological apparatus of the state. This issue contains important texts by Moses Hess, Max Adler, Weitling, Rühle, and Mattick. The presentation of little-known or simply unpublished works with comments and annotations is definitely one of the major merits of the *Etudes*. In issue No. 15, Rubel published an essay on "La Légende de Marx ou Engels Fondateur," suggesting that the early and still timid Engels was responsible for the buildup of "Marxism." In addition to important studies by Draper and Bahne, this issue also contains notable texts by Pierre Leroux and Joseph Déjacque. In No. 16, there is a translation of a Moses Hess text and of one by Marx on Friedrich List. In the last three numbers (17, 18, 19-20), there are also very interesting studies. In particular, there is a long essay spread over

50. On this theme, cf. "Nachwort" to K. Marx, F. Engels, *Die russische Kommune* (Munich, 1972), pp. 277-326.

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all three on the growth of the "Marxist" doctrine by Margaret Manale who, in 1975, co-authored with Rubel a chronology on Marx's life and work[51] that remains an excellent conclusion to the 1956 *Bibliographie*. The last *Etudes* issue features two headings, the cooperation of Rubel and Louis Janover on a "Marx Dictionary" which is now awaiting publication by Editions du Seuil. The two headings are "State and Anarchism" and aim at restoring the libertarian substance of Marx's thought — the critique of politics which underlies all of Marx's thought and which, according to Rubel, invariably runs through all of his thought in varying degress of explicitness?[52] It is clear that the *Etudes* represent the most important contribution to the *Marx-Forschung*. In fact, *Marxismusstudien,* after the first two issues of 1954 and 1957, dwindled in the frequency of publications and has in all cases strayed from the original objectives of research, despite the efforts of Iring Fetscher, its prime mover.

Marx as a Critic of Marxism

In 1974, Rubel collected in a single volume some of his essays, especially recent ones, showing the continuity of his work. A variety of themes are dealt with, all rooted in a viewpoint that seeks both philological accuracy as well as critical interpretation.

(A) *The Legend of Marxism.* Rubel's short presentation to the 1970 Wuppertal conference on the 150th anniversary of Engels' birth, after noting that "Marxism" was born as an invective and insult, essentially attributes to Engels the historical and ideological responsibility for having reconstituted a critical way of thought into a doctrine. By believing himself its heir, Engels was in effect its founder. With this presentation, which created a great scandal especially among "orthodox" Marxists and Eastern scholars, Rubel opened up some new ground for research which was later enriched very competently by Margaret Manale as well as others sharing his position, such as Hobsbawm and especially Haupt, who, though considering Rubel's provocative attitude "debatable," in fact later followed in his tracks.[53]

(B) *Marx's Anarchism.* Analyzing Marx's early writings and rereading mature ones as consistent and continuous with the earlier ones, Rubel holds that Marx's entire work is essentially a critique of the State and money, and argues that the *Critique's* section on the State, contained in the famous 1857 project but never written, could contain nothing other than the theory of a society liberated from the State. Bakunin, his own assertions to the contrary notwithstanding, fell victim to the frenzied elitism of a clandestine existence suggested to him by the ever-thirsty romantic vocation of the professional conspirator. Rubel believes that these views were foreign to Marx and that, strangely enough, there was a lot more "Leninism" in Bakunin's political actions. Marx as the "theoretician of anarchism," however, can be primarily located in writings before 1846. For the Marx of those early years political emancipation was the ultimate form of human emancipation within the established order. All politics was part of the old world and its critique alone could open up a radical critique of the existing state of affairs. In this connection, there are fundamental appraisals of the French revolution, Jacobinism and the Terror. But Rubel believes that although Marx

51. M. Rubel and Margaret Manale, *Marx without Myth* (Oxford, 1975).

52. Cf. also another chapter from *Marx Dictionary* (*Léxique de Marx*) entitled "Marx et la Nation," in *Mondes en Développement* (December, 1979).

53. Cf. Eric Hobsbawm, "La Diffusione del Marxismo" in *Studi Storici*, 2 (1974), pp. 241-269; Georges Haupt, "Marx e il Marxismo" in *Storia del Marxismo*, Vol. I, *op.cit.*, pp. 291-314. Cf. also essays in the second volume of *Storia del Marxismo* (Turin, 1979). For a view of *Marx Critique du Marxisme*, cf. Olivier Corpet, *Pour une Théorie Marxienne de* l'Autogestion," in *Autogestion et Socialisme*, 35-36 (1976), pp. 71-98.

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stood apart from self-proclaimed anarchists, he always remained essentially faithful to their inspiration while also lending more emphasis to the analysis of the process of production and the critique of money than to the analysis of the forms of civil association and the critique of the State.

(C) *The October Myth.* Rubel's stand on the social nature of "socialist" countries and of the role of Marxism in those countries has already been discussed: State-managerial capitalism on the social level and bureaucratic dictatorship on the political level. Marxism and Leninism are nothing but ideologies of accumulation. The revolutionary Bolshevik party became the vehicle of objective determinism of the productive forces in an extremely backward country which lacked a bourgeois ruling class free from autocracy and endowed with a clear modernizing outlook. The scandal of October is by no means the Soviet Union's transformation into an imperial power, but the propaganda that passed off as "socialism" a process of capitalist accumulation that caused, even more than those preceding it, oppression and suffering.

(D) *Party and Proletariat.* According to Rubel, what really counts for Marx is *Selbsttätigkeit* -- the self-activity and autonomy of the emancipatory movement. The parties that are periodically organized are simple means for the self-liberation process and the proletariat's self-suppression in a classless society. The historical party, organ of the proletariat, is instead the cumulative experience of liberation coupled with the utopian anticipation of future society. This party is the expression of the concrete movement that is finalized in communism and is the depository of consciousness and knowledge, but is never completely embodied in formal and specific institutions. The constitution of the class into a party is necessary for the conquest of democracy and for erasing all residues of the feudal and reactionary past. But from that moment on, there is the beginning of the process of self-emancipation which aims at the suppression of the State and of money and the formation of a society where labor can be free from constraint and exploitation. This establishes a continuity between the utopians and Marx, whose thought is much more radical within a tradition that the radicals themselves initiated. Marx recognized the proletariat's spontaneity and saw within it a historical mission while he at the same time worked, without hegemonial claims, toward providing that proletariat with knowledge of the laws of society and of the means and goals of the process of liberation. According to Rubel, in the real movement toward communism Marx grasped the norms of a revolutionary ethic which is both a critical consciousness of existing conditions and the anticipation of communism -- both harmoniously tied to socialist utopia. This is why in Marx liberty (the revolutionary ethic) coexists with necessity (determinism of productive forces), and utopia with *critique*. With Marx, socialism did not proceed *from* utopia *to* science, as claimed by Engels and afterward by Soviet scientism. Marx never denied the utopian strain inside the real movement while also analyzing with critical-historical and scientific rigor the laws operating in the process of production. Moreover, if socialism is a science freed from utopia, it is only normal that it should become the party's prescription entrusted to an elite charged with bringing knowledge to the purely mechanical agents of social transformation from above and from outside. Formal parties and *political* labor movements struggle for the conquest of democracy, for the eight-hour day, for labor legislation and for universal suffrage. The historical party that crosses an entire historical phase unharmed, anticipates communism -- the final goal of the long process of self-emancipation. The party-as-science or the party-as-power emerges instead in all (backward) countries where it has been established as the instrument of industrialization and accumulation. All of these themes are

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splendidly interwoven in the discussion of barbarism and the road to collapse: in fact if, as according to Rubel it happened, the conscious action of the oppressed (for Marx, men who suffer and think) does not intervene to affirm the positive pole of liberation as an inherent possibility in the determinism of productive forces, the negative pole of barbarism is sure to prevail. Hence, the totalitarianisms of our century, largely the products of a missed process of self-emancipation, all tragic caricatures and ludicrous parodies of the sought and never found liberation, national socialisms and national communisms included. For Rubel, the triumph of "Marxism" as political superstition in particular is synonymous with the defeat of the labor movement and the decline of the great hope for liberty that went with it. This last phenomenon entails a great paradox: a misfortune-ridden and ideologized history of publications of the works of a master thinker who, more than anyone else, has often stood as an inoffensive witness rather than a critical conscience in the great theoretical debate on the meaning and destiny of our society.

Therefore, a philological investigation seeking to recuperate a dispersed intellect is built on a very precise hypothesis: the historical viewpoint in the context of continuity. Marx is not a magic watershed that marks out history in an irreversible way. His advent is not the mysterious epiphany of a miracle pregnant with future or inevitable wonders. Rubel classifies Marx within that long process of critical *Aufklärung* running through the human history of self-emancipation and demonstrates his indebtedness to Spinoza, Hegel, Feuerbach and the 16th century materialists as well as Saint-Simon, Owen, Fourier, Flora Tristan, Proudhon and many others. With the exception of oppressive societies, nothing was ever rejected by Marx, who instead sifted and reworked everything, at times perhaps in a spirit of anger but always without ideological prejudices or disciplinary boundaries. This should also be the method of Marxological research, no matter what its conclusions may be. *Marx-Forschung*, as conceived by Rubel, works in full ideological independence. Among authors discussed and cited, there are reformists and revolutionaries, revisionists and orthodox ones from Bernstein and Luxemburg, Sorel and Kautsky, Otto Bauer and Trotsky to Pannekoek and Korsch and also conservative scholars like Pipes and Aron, and radical thinkers like Landauer, Benjamin, Horkheimer and Marcuse, without rigid contrasts among "Marxist" schools or among political allegiances. Furthermore, *Marx-Forschung* proves a training ground for the unification of knowledge against all academic or disciplinary limitations. The world is actually full of "Marxist" economists, "Marxist" historians and "Marxist" philosophers, while *Marx-Forschung* calls for pursuing the intellectual adventures of Marx, the eternal student who filled out entire notebooks with quotations from the most disparate and diverse disciplines, because he was proposing (how consciously, we do not know) the unification of knowledge from the single viewpoint he considered valid: that of a *critique*. Later sanctified like the immutable receptacle of "Marxism," Marx reached a cultural level and a mass of knowledge perhaps unsurpassed in his time. Paradoxically, however, he can only be described by one word — *critic*. It seems that for Rubel, too, this term is more than sufficient.[54]

54. For other works of Rubel not cited so far, cf. "Socrate et le Christ," *La Nef* (June 1948); "Contribution à l'Histoire de la Genèse du Capital," in *Sociology and Social Philosophy*, edited with an introduction and notes by B.T. Bottomore and M. Rubel (London, 1956); "Choix de Documents Inédits (Archives E. Fournière) dont Trois Lettres de K. Marx," in *L'Actualité de l'Histoire*, 25 (1958); *Marx-Chronik. Daten zu Leben und Werk* (Munich, 1968); "Introduction" to Jules Andrieu, *Notes pour Servir à l'Histoire de la Commune de Paris*

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Rubel's scholarly activity cannot be considered completed. In fact, he is now involved in a series of initiatives that might bring in the most important phase of his Marxological research -- at least in terms of his activity as an editor. In addition to the *Marx Dictionary* commissioned by *Editions du Seuil* in collaboration with Louis Janover, Rubel is finishing the *Philosophie* volume of Marx's *Oeuvres* with a mid-1981 date of expected publication. But perhaps the most important enterprise of his career -- a logical and challenging conclusion to over 30 years of study -- is a Marx Jubilee edition: an edition of Marx's works on the centennial of his death (1883). This work is still in the project stage, confronted with considerable material as well as intellectual difficulties. At this time, however, Rubel is probably the only person in the West, where States do not promote a "Marxist" ideology, capable of directing such an ambitious work. The texts are to appear in the original language (Marx's own) and will be subdivided into 35 volumes to be arranged according to a threefold division that might be considered the result of Rubel's critical and philological reading of Marx: the critique of ideology, the critique of politics and the critique of political economy.

en 1871 (Paris, 1971); *Stalin in Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten*, ed. M. Rubel (Reinbek bei Hamburg, 1975); "Présentation" to Thomas Hamilton, *Les Hommes et les Moeurs aux Etats-Unis* (Geneva, 1979).

ON THE 'NEW' HISTORY: QUENTIN SKINNER'S PROPOSAL FOR A NEW HISTORY OF POLITICAL IDEOLOGY

by John Keane

According to one sacred myth which currently enchants the political science profession, Anglo-American political theory now enjoys a remarkable convalescence.[1] Compared with those wan times when the death of formal political thinking had seemed imminent, the discipline, it is said, is marked by a healthy and productive rigour. The manifold symptoms are reputedly self-evident. More frequently than in the past, one hears, conference delegates meet to discuss the political classics; the discipline's fledgling journals go from strength to strength; dogmatic behaviouralists at last admit the need to supplement their positivistic search for reliable "data" with seminars on the history of political thought; and so on. Feeding upon such signs, the political theory myth narrates what is fast becoming for many a sacred history. It relates an event which took place in a distant and fabulous past two or so decades ago: the revival of the critical powers of political reason. Thanks to the intrepid efforts of certain eminent scholars (such as Sabine, McIlwain or Strauss) who sustained the discipline during its long illness and consequent upon the creative interventions of their students at this fabled moment of the "beginnings," it is contentedly observed that political theory has become what it is today: an influential and respectable profession.

1. See the recent but typical panegyric of Melvin Richter in *Political Theory and Political Education*, ed. Melvin Richter (Princeton, 1980), pp. 3-56.

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No doubt, the political theory myth, like all others, lends meaning and value to the daily life of many a serious political theorist. Its sacred narrative serves effectively to quash haunting questions about which direction is up and which way is forward. Potential objections from within the political theory establishment against the illusory power of this narrative are silenced; they become utterable only in private. Thus secured against internal dissent, whole sections of the profession preserve their self-importance. They celebrate truths which resemble eulogies on behalf of the dead or (from the less complacent standpoint of contemporary discourses elsewhere in the "cultural sciences") dull and trivial metaphors devoid of genuine novelty.

The following argument engages perhaps the exemplary instance of this self-congratulatory posture induced by the political theory myth: Quentin Skinner's so-called "new history" of political ideology. As is well-known, the new history movement already commands enormous privileges within the profession. Reviews of Skinner's long-awaited study of Renaissance and Reformation political discourse consistently speak of its remarkable and penetrating quality. Predictably, John Pocock's prognosis that this study is certain to occasion much controversy remains unfulfilled.[2] Sheltered by the profession's myth, the new history's prestige seems to advance unhindered on all fronts. Its claims even enchant students previously under the tutelage of, say, patriarchal rhetoricians, whose smoke consistently failed to produce fire. Meanwhile, in Cambridge, the new history serves as the enlightened organizing principle of whole seminars; there, one is tempted to say, it now becomes the political philosophy of the Senior Common Room.

Amidst these *succès foux*, I wish only to critically analyze here several of the faulty premises upon which Skinner's "strictly historical approach" rests. In one or two very limited ways, it is true, this celebrated strategy broaches the project of reformulating a genuinely interpretive approach to the understanding of the political past from the standpoint of the present. Clearly, however, it suffers from so many fundamental weaknesses that, whatever its meager potential, the new history of political ideology simply cannot be sustained in its present form.

The feebleness of the whole new history project is immediately evident in all three of its central propositions. The first might be termed the intentionality claim. This is indebted to an insight of speech act theory, namely, that inasmuch as agents both say and do something through their performative utterances (and objectify them in, say, the form of a political treatise), the historian's understanding of such utterances necessitates a grasp of their illocutionary force (Austin). Such force corresponds to what agents saw themselves as doing in issuing those performative utterances. The proclamation of the death of the author[3] is here declared to be premature. Against the idea of the author-subject as a fantastic ideological construction and texts as autonomous, "worldless" objects whose meaning is produced through the play of textual structures, shifting themes and antinomies, Skinner invokes what appears to be a promising hermeneutic rule: historical inter-

2. Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1978); cf. the reviews by Judith Shklar and Julian Franklin in *Political Theory*, 7 (November 1979), pp. 549-558, the "response" by David Boucher in the August 1980 issue, and the comments by J.G.A. Pocock, "Reconstructing the Traditions: Quentin Skinner's Historians' History of Political Thought," *Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory*, 3 (Fall 1979), pp. 95-113.

3. Michel Foucault, "What Is an Author?" *Screen*, 20 (Spring 1979), pp. 13-33 (with replies by Lucien Goldmann and Jacques Lacan); Roland Barthes, 'The Death of the Author," *Image, Music, Text* (Glasgow, 1977), pp. 142-148.

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pretation is synonymous with explications of what authors were self-consciously attempting in their creative acts of writing.[4] Texts, it is said, do not speak, only authors do. Writers are not merely positioned prisoners of the discourse within whose boundaries they take pen in hand. Nor are they transcendental egos: "authors" always exercise a certain (developed) "practical" consciousness of the conditions and possibilities in the field of action within which they write. This is equally a point directed against the "New Criticism" of Leavis and others,[5] a rebuttal of its critique of the "intentional fallacy": texts, duly pondered *as* texts, will never yield their secret meanings to the interpreter's intelligence. Texts are not authorless entities that produce their own meaning; on the contrary, they are intentional objects of their creators. Thus, to know what writers saw themselves as doing in issuing utterances in the form of a "codified" text is *equivalent* to understanding their performed illocutionary speech acts (of promising, warning, criticizing, etc.). In search of the meaning of "message" of texts, that is, the historian's range of descriptions must focus upon what "motivated" authors' speech acts, what they were intended to mean, and how this meaning was intended to be taken. Skinner speaks loosely, even crudely, about the "dynamic" relationship between writers' professed principles and the actual practices of political life,[6] but the implication is clear: professed intentions (which serve either as genuine motives for action or as legitimating rationalizations of given or recommended states of affairs) make a difference to the production and reproduction of political life and *a fortiori* must therefore be cited in order to explain that life.

It should be noted immediately that this intentionality claim presupposes two highly problematic points, whose implications cannot be fully pursued here. In the first place the new history asserts the fantastic claim that agents always have a privileged access to the significance of their own intentional utterances. This assumption is obviously vulnerable in view of the recent work of, e.g., Giddens and Hirsch on the unconscious, symptomatic meanings that chronically escape the self-understanding of agents.[7] Such writing is in turn indebted to the insights of classical psychoanalysis, for which dream analysis is central: the dream is understood as an ensemble of disguised and substituted representations that have been formed on the boundary between impulses and civilization, and recovered through the deformed utterances of the dreamer.[8] A second presupposition is equally vulnerable. The new history naively assumes that language, far from displaying a "productivity" of its own, comes in the form of transparent wrappings within which these intentional utterances are enclosed and issued. To be sure, Skinner cleverly censures defenders of the fallacy of the absolute text through his insistence that any political text is always a discourse told by somebody, said by someone to someone else about something. Yet this censure assumes the form of a misleading and abstract reversal

4. "Some Problems in the Analysis of Political Thought and Action," *Political Theory*, 2 (August 1974), p. 283; "Motives, Intentions and the Interpretation of Texts," *New Literary History*, 3 (1972), pp. 402, 404, 408; "Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas," *History and Theory*, 8 (1969), pp. 48-49.

5. F.R. Leavis, "The Responsible Critic or the Functions of Criticism at any Time," in *A Selection from Scrutiny*, ed. F.R. Leavis (Cambridge, 1968): cf. the classic argument of W.K. Wimsatt and Monroe C. Beardsley, "The Intentional Fallacy," *Sewanee Review*, 54 (1946).

6. "Some Problems in the Analysis of Political Thought and Action," *op.cit.*, pp. 289-290; "Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas," *op.cit.*, pp. 39-43.

7. Anthony Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory* (London, 1979), pp. 56-59; Eric D. Hirsch Jr., *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven and London, 1967), pp. 51-57.

8. Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams* (New York, 1965).

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— it easily exposes itself to the telling criticisms of the intentional fallacy launched long ago by "structuralist" theories of the text. Ricoeur's distinction between the subjective and objective moments of meaning is helpful in clarifying this point. The new history may be said to focus only on the former — the utterer's meaning, in the threefold sense of the self-reference of speech acts, their illocutionary dimension, and the intention of recognition by an audience. Consequently, the subjectivism of the new history eclipses the objective moment of authorial utterances, or what has been called the semantic autonomy of texts. This autonomy (which is expressed in the commonplace distinction between what authors mean and what their texts mean) is dependent upon the logic of intersignification, upon those "objective" generative devices and rules that preside over both the structure of the discourse and its reception by readers.[9]

We can pass over these already decisive difficulties, and rejoin the argument of the new history. In its view, to exhibit authorial utterances as guided by intentions is to anticipate an explanation of their meaning. Such explanation of authorial intentions can only be completed, secondly, through recourse to the extra-textual horizons within which those utterances are produced. This broaches Skinner's by now conventional thesis of authors' dependency upon a field of conventions.[10]

Historical interpretation, in his view, consists in the recovery of agents' intention as expressed in relation to an ensemble of conventions of political argumentation within which these agents already and necessarily stand. The speech acts of authors consist in their meaning something by saying or doing something in relation to others. Speech acts are not simply "precipitates" of their context (as orthodox Marxist interpretations of political discourse have been prone to assert). Yet they are nevertheless always "situated" or conventional, in the sense that they standardly intend to communicate arguments to others and therefore must be recognizable *as* intentions. Insofar as they are addressed to strictly limited, precisely identifiable audiences, the fate of all works of political argument is bound up (though never absolutely so) with the established universe of permissible communication.

This reasoning does *not* bring into play (contra Parekh and Berki)[11] the simple and erroneous assumption that prevailing conventions are somehow immutable. In principle, Skinner's new history correctly admits of the possibility of inventive discourse, of writers consciously or unintendedly extending or even radically subverting prevailing conventions of political argumentation. The new history's concern with conventions is more subtle: in the process of historical interpretation, contexts are seen to serve as courts of appeal for assessing the plausibility of interpretations of speech acts that have a polysemic, sometimes obscure, character. Through the invocation of contexts, that is, the historian can more readily understand the extent to which a particular situated author intentionally ignores, criticizes or wilfully apologizes for prevailing political conventions. Thus, the relationship between an author's text and its context is an instance of the hermeneutic circle: particular authorial utterances can be explicated as "meaningful"

9. Paul Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning* (Fort Worth, 1976), chapter 3.

10. "Conventions and the Understanding of Speech Acts," *Philosophical Quarterly*, 20 (1970), pp. 118-138; "Motives, Intentions and the Interpretation of Texts," *op.cit.*, pp. 406-407; "Hermeneutics and the Role of History," *New Literary History*, 7 (1976-76), pp. 221, 227-228.

11. B. Parekh and R.N. Berki, "The History of Political Ideas: A Critique of Q. Skinner's Methodology," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 34 (April-June 1973), pp. 167ff.

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only if it is recognized that they always systematically allude "outside themselves" to prevailing assumptions, local styles of argumentation and contemporary or past political personalities and struggles. Written discourse both refers back to its writer at the same time that it alludes beyond itself to the world of political action. In short, a text's meaningfulness cannot be conceived as immanent within the text, an immanence that can be recovered by "reading" the text "over and over again" (to repeat infamous words once used by Plamenatz).[12] Through the thesis of conventions, Skinner seeks to debunk the commonplace fetishism of texts that have been mysteriously raised to the status of "classics." As Skinner's own work on Hobbes has tried to demonstrate,[13] and as he repeats against Mesnard and Sabine in the methodological introduction to *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, a history that abstractly dwells upon the "classics" must be decentered. (It is another matter whether the consistently "classical" biases of Skinner's actual historical research contradicts this intention.) At most, according to the new history of political ideology, "classic" texts are to be constituted as focii around which redescriptions of the range of intentional meanings of past political discourse can be organized.

The new history's claims that the hermeneutic appropriation of texts must recognize their status as first, codified objects intentionally produced within, secondly, a horizon of extra-textual conventions presupposes another: the goal of the history of political ideologies is the sympathetic recovery or rediscription of the *mentalité* of past phases of political life. The new history yearns for that self-contented posture of the reptile that has swallowed its prey whole. Skinner submits that honest historians of political thinking must set themselves a modest aim: that of reproducing "real history" through a "strictly historical approach" that provides "realistic pictures" of how "actual" political speech acts unfolded in the past.[14] Interpreters must cast themselves in the role of good-natured observers bent (as Skinner's more recent methodological writings increasingly stress)[15] on establishing the complex connections between the history of political "ideology" — understood positivistically as an action-orienting *Weltanschauung* — and its implication within conventional situations of political action. The new history must be concerned to identify the logic of processes of ideological formation and supersession through careful, patient and exact descriptions of the past. The iniquitous *imposition* of "distorting perspectives" upon this past must be diligently avoided. Writers' conventionally-mediated intentions must be treated as both self-explicatory and capable of "recovery" through the initiation of a mental process called understanding. Armed with this fallacy, the new history confidently berates its opponents for their numbed sense of history: Walzer's account of the generation of the Calvinist theory of revolution is said to anachronistically misjudge the impact of the radical conciliarism of d'Ailly, Gerson and others; C.B. Macpherson's history of possessive individualism is judged for invoking "rank anachronisms" and proceeding at a fundamentally unhistorical level of abstraction; and so on.

12. John Plamenatz, *Man and Society* (London, 1964), Vol. I, p. x.

13. Cf. "Conquest and Consent: Thomas Hobbes and the Engagement Controversy" in G.E. Aylmer, ed., *The Interregnum: The Quest for Settlement* (London, 1972), pp. 79-98 and "History and Ideology in the English Revolution," *The Historical Journal*, 8 (1965), pp. 151-178.

14. Some Problems in the Analysis of Political Thought and Action," *op.cit.*, p. 280; *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought, op.cit.*, p. xi.

15. "Some Problems in the Analysis of Political Thought and Action," *op.cit.*, pp. 289-301.

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For the new history, then, the task of interpreting the past is posited as a process that mimetically reproduces the immediately given intentions of actors within their respective conventional fields. The new history stands or falls upon its assumption (siphoned explicitly from Collingwood's maxim that historians must reenact past experience) [16] that there can be an untrammelled identity between knowers and producers of the political argumentation of the past. In principle, it is said, intentional utterances that have been produced are also capable of being fully re-enacted. The new history here reveals its senility, embracing a covertly positivist, copy model of interpretation long since demolished within serious circles of interpretation theory. This model's presumption that valid understanding is identical with the loyal reproduction of the intentionally produced and meaningful utterances of others clearly constitutes a dimsighted lapse into the very objectivism against which the project of the new history has consistently (and correctly) rallied.[17] For the empathy model of imitating or "recovering" the meaning of others' utterances, of empathetically looking them in the eye and stepping into their shoes, is built upon the erroneous presupposition of an initially uninvolved observer whose specific identity and prejudices have been selflessly repressed in the act of interpretation. At least two interrelated and rather elementary arguments can be adduced against this model. Both counterarguments cast doubts on the basic competence of the new history, forcing it to reflect again and more deeply on its false presuppositions and perhaps even encouraging it to turn in the direction of what might be called a negotiation model of historical interpretation.

In the first place, a theme common to hermeneutics since Heidegger ought to be reaffirmed: not only those whose utterances are to be interpreted, but *also* interpreters themselves are always situated within a field of historically-bound conventions and practices mediated by ordinary language. It is astounding that this point is systematically missed in Skinner's account. This ommission is in spite of token references to Gadamer, Ricoeur and Habermas, the occasional (yet never developed) hints that interpreters' "experience and sensibility" are a necessary precondition of interpretation,[18] and finally, the rather different claim (directed against Butterfield)[19] that "realistic pictures" of past political thinking are possible only inasmuch as interpreters structure their interpretations through prior choices about "what deserves to be studied and what is best ignored."[20] Even in a minimal sense (viz., that they already work within an ordinary language framework enmeshed in forms of "practical life"), interpreters are always implicated within, and must always draw upon, the universe of linguistically-structured, cultural life activities within which their own subjectivity has also been formed. This universe and its tacit conventions, indeed, serve as a hermeneutic point of departure, a medium of the *possibility* of the generation of historical interpretations. Interpreters always already stand within this field of intersubjectively shared conventions and "preunderstandings" with whose necessary "bias" they approach the past. They cannot abstractly jump over the boundaries of this field and walk contentedly on the *terra*

16. R.G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History* (New York, 1956), pp. 282-302.

17. Cf. Skinner's sympathetic discussion of certain anti-positivist trends in historical research in "The Limits of Historical Explanations," *Philosophy*, 41 (July 1966), pp. 199-215.

18. "Hermeneutics and the Role of History," *op.cit.*, p. 228.

19. "Some Problems in the Analysis of Political Thought and Action," *op.cit.*, p. 281. Here Skinner explicitly opposes the objectivist claims of H. Butterfield, *The Whig Interpretation of History* (Harmondsworth, 1973).

20. *Loc cit.*

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firma of the past. There can be no "contemplative" or "presuppositionless" understanding of the speech and action of others.

This is not to insist (fallaciously) that interpreters are of necessity cast in the mold of situated spectators surveying an alien past. The process of interpretive understanding is neither identical with the immediate, empathetic grasp of the past (as the new history suggests in vain) nor, on the other hand, with the simple and "motivated" subjection of this past to the presently situated concerns of the interpreter. The logic of interpretive understanding defies such a dualism. Here the new history devalues a second crucial insight that it ought to have sensed from first-hand experience: all historical interpretation is possible only through the mutual participation of interpreter and interpreted in the medium of a common language that provides "access" to forms of life activity with which it is intermeshed. In order that interpreters can understand their past they must at least have mastered its language, a mastery which in turn allows that past to be rendered into the words and actions of the present. This shared, ordinary language framework permits, through the medium of intersubjectively valid symbols, the negotiation of the meaningfulness of past actors' utterances and activities. In spite of the ineradicable difference between past and present that is given by the flux of historical time and space, interpreters are already (even in a rudimentary sense) "members" of the communicative universe that they seek to understand. This fact of the *a priori* participation of "prejudiced" interpreters within the realm of past communication under interpretation is concealed by the positivism of the not-so-new history. Its presupposition of selfless researches who are (initially at least) detachedly removed from their "object" of interpretation fails to consider that, in order for interpretation to be possible at all, both must already be conjoined in and through a shared linguistic *point de départ*, in accordance with whose rules and possible meanings interpreters are able to proceed with their interpretive acts. This implies that historians' understanding of past political speech acts is rendered possible through their assumption of the role of partner in dialogue with those acts. The actual meaning of texts (broadly equivalent to what has been intentionally said and written historically) as they address themselves to the present is always co-determined by their historically-situated interpreters. That is, the relationship between interpreter and interpreted is not one of an absolute subject who stands as "authority" over and against its "object" (authors engaged in speech acts). It is, rather, one of participant (and situated) subject and situated partner, conjoined through the medium of a common language. In sum, interpretive understanding of the past is a form of interlocution or communicative action. It is an instance of the dialectic of distanciation and appropriation (Ricoeur), of the endless struggle between the otherness that transforms temporal and spatial distance into cultural estrangement, and the appropriation of precisely this that has become separated from us. Reading, in other words, affects what Gadamer has called a fusion of horizons (*Horizontverschmelzung*). This fusion of the world horizons of the reader with those of the writer "rescues" the meaning of the text from the threat of distanciation only by placing its meaning in a new proximity to those in the present. (In this respect, as has been argued within the hermeneutic tradition from Heidegger's *Being and Time*, the historian's interpretive understanding is neither a mere "method" nor a privileged mode of enquiry; it is rather a more systematically articulated form of that which is in fact routinely practiced by subjects situated within any culture). Contrary to the new history's weak attempts to revive Collingwood, interpretation

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cannot be conceived as a reproductive act that rehabilitates some primal original; the annexation of the past always comes in the form of a *productive* achievement that participates in a *present* meaning.

If it is the case that every attempted recognition of what has been written or said is in fact a newly produced understanding mediated by the cultural horizons and language of the interpreter, then the new history can be said to misleadingly deprecate two additional arguments of some consequence. First, the Skinnerian conviction that the meaning of a text is equivalent to what conventionally-circumscribed agents saw themselves doing in issuing certain utterances stands in need of complete reconstruction. It cannot grasp the fact that unintended consequences are a chronic feature of all speech acts, past and present. Against the new history's utterly ingenuous precept that agents always act in a "rational" manner,[22] it must be stressed that the meaning of such utterances *always* goes beyond their authors' intentions, in the specific sense that the "significance" of these intentions, to repeat, must always be co-determined by the interpreter. The restitution of the meanings of past political speech acts is possible only to the extent that they are reconstructed and expressed "in other words" and by way of the interpreter's own judgements. Accordingly, there can be no absolute knowledge of a text: it is part of the fate of any text that its meaning is dependent upon an indefinite number of readers and therefore of multiple interpretations. Each age must accordingly understand a transmitted text in its own way. In spite of their best intentions, those in the present are always parochial with respect to their indefinite interpreters in the indeterminate future. Conversely, as Habermas has remarked, historians are always cast uncertainly and temporarily in the role of the last historians.[23]

The new history's apologetic character constitutes a second consequence of its disavowal of a negotiation model of interpretation. Our insistence that the understanding of the past is a productive achievement of a situated interpreter subverts the new history's false assumption that the tasks of explication and evaluation of the past *can* be separated in favor of the former. As might be expected, this assumption derives from Skinner's prior claim that historical interpreters can assume the role of detached and selfless chroniclers who look the past in the eye. On the basis of this mendacious claim, the possibility of historians' critical reflection upon the power of tradition is smugly shelved. Professional political theorists can momentarily breathe easily: texts must be accurately understood first, and then (in accordance with readers' whims) judged only later, if at all. Against such assurances, it must be stressed that Skinner's history of political ideology unwittingly celebrates the power of the past over the present. As several critics of its legitimation of "dusty antiquarianism" have intimated,[24] the new history suffers from a failure of critical imagination. It seeks indiscriminately to maximize the quantity of treasured "reproductions" of the political past for those living in the present, forgetting their likely need to shake off the burdens and legacies of this past. In other words, the historian's power of critical questioning to

21. Paul Ricoeur, *op.cit.*, pp. 43-44, 89-95; Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New York, 1975), pp. 273ff, 337ff, 358; cf. Raymond Williams, *Problems in Materialism and Culture* (London, 1980), pp. 45-49.

22. "Motives, Intentions and the Interpretation of Texts," *op.cit.*, p. 405.

23. J. Habermas, *Zur Logik der Sozialwissenschaften* (Frankfurt am Main, 1973), p. 273.

24. C.D. Tarlton, "Historicity, Meaning and Revisionism in the Study of Political Thought," *History and Theory*, 12 (1973), pp. 307-328; M. Leslie, "In Defense of Anachronism," *Political Studies*, 18 (1970), pp. 433-447.

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break up the nature-like hold of the past over the present, to self-consciously appropriate, preserve or break up tradition, and therefore to enhance the (potential) subjectivity of those living in the present, is devalued. (Contrast, for example, the energetic and critical powers evidenced within contemporary feminist political theory, or in particular contributions of such historians as Foucault, E.P. Thompson or the later Le Roy Ladurie.) This devaluation is only reinforced by the new history's impoverished presupposition (discussed above with reference to its intentionality claim) that agents always have a privileged access to the significance of their utterances.

At a stroke, the world of political argumentation, both past and present, is purged of nature-like relations of power, interest and self-deception. The new history turns a blind eye to the dictum that power is everywhere, that (at least in all hitherto existing societies) relations of command and obedience have become routinized or "sedimented" within the modes of life within which speaking and acting subjects are formed. In the contented view of the new history, political argumentation is a fully transparent play of self-conscious intentionality. The possibility that authors may unconsciously or quasi-consciously "rationalize" their power-ridden forms of life as universal is ruled out. Conversely, the new history effectively silences further consideration of the by now familiar set of questions concerning the relationship between given authorial utterances and their explanatory clarification through the listing of probable causal antecedents.[25] True, Skinner acknowledges the need for an explanatory account of actors' self-declared intentions. Yet this sense of explanation is flaccid and uncritical, remaining bogged within the immediacy of those intentions. Amidst the profession's celebrations of the new history's brilliance, the post-Enlightenment insight that we cannot so simply judge an age and its constituents on the basis of their *own* self-understanding is lost. In Skinner's view, to explain authorial utterances is to describe their guiding intentions.[26] Notwithstanding an allusion to the explanatory importance of judging the *rationality* of agent's utterances and motives,[27] Skinner maintains repeatedly that to know what authors meant is to know how they intended their utterances to be taken and, therefore, *why* they performed their particular speech acts.

Four decades ago, Walter Benjamin urged that history had until now been written from the standpoint of conformists and conquerors.[28] Following Nietzsche[29] he insisted that, inasmuch as the continuum of hitherto existing history has been that of the oppressor, official "History" must be seriously loathed. It is true, the inverse task of rewriting history against the hegemony of the ruling classes and in anamnestic solidarity with the oppressed of the past may be illusory, if only because it opens itself up to a dependency upon the mythic presupposition of a unified vanquished whose viewpoint can be recovered in all its immediacy by its well-intentioned defendents. Furthermore, Benjamin's proposals for the rescue and redemption of a lost past relied

25. For example, see H. von Wright, *Explanation and Understanding* (London, 1971) and Charles Taylor, "Explaining Action," *Inquiry*, 13 (1973), pp. 54-89.

26. "Motives, Intentions and the Interpretation of Texts," *op.cit.*, p. 400; "Some Problems in the Analysis of Political Thought and Action," *op.cit.*, pp. 289ff and especially p. 295.

27. " 'Social Meaning' and the Explanation of Social Action," in Peter Laslett *et al.*, *Philosophy, Politics and Society* (Oxford, 1972), pp. 148, 150-157.

28. "Theses on the Philosophy of History," *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt (London, 1973), pp. 257-258.

29. Friedrich Nietzsche, "The Use and Abuse of History," in *The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche,* ed. O. Levy (London, 1921), Vol. 5, pp. 1-100.

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upon certain unconvincing premises: for example, a theory of language as representational naming; its positing of a golden past in which there was not yet a need to struggle with the discursive aspects of language; and the belief (derived from Goethe) that historical interpretation was capable of redeeming the authentic origins of the discordant elements of contemporary phenomena. Notwithstanding the difficulties of these premises, Benjamin's advice on the need to remember the dismembered, to recollect the broken past, remains haunting. The permanent need to break the power of the officially recognized dead over the living, to "rescue" those authors, texts and events that have been pushed aside (as "irrelevant," "confused" or "obscure") or falsely incorporated into the present, remains. In this connection, it is customary to note that the aim of hermeneutic understanding of the past consists in making "one's own" what has become alien, to rescue the meaning of a past that threatens to become permanently distant and strange. Today, in an age marked by its state authoritarianism, this goal can only be realized through the struggle to make "foreign" what has become habitually "our own," to distance ourselves from conventional accounts of "real history." It has been suggested above that the process of interpretive understanding of the past defies both the logics of subjection and simple reproduction, that it is better analyzed as a form of interlocution. If this is plausible then nonconformist historical interpretation must explore the possibility of mediating two apparently inconsistent goals that may in fact be consistently singular: those of orienting ourselves to past traditions in order that their conformist versions and consequences can be buried through an active future-oriented process of forgetting. Analogous to the psychoanalytic project, emancipatory historiography must defend the need to break the hold of "the past" over the present — by way of a defense of a possible, but indeterminate future that appropriates certain past memories.

By contrast with this task of defining a future-oriented project of brushing history "against the grain," the new history's misguided quest to descriptively grasp what past authors "could in practice have been intending to communicate" is also evidently conformist. Its aim of producing a "real history" of political ideologies looks more like an official history that unwittingly defends the hold of past ideologies over the present. At the risk of dampening much collective rejoicing within a myth-bound profession, a more apt motto for Skinnerian history can be proposed: *Tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner.*

MARXIST PERSPECTIVES (1978-1981) AND BEYOND

by Moishe Gonzales

Under the title "What's Black, White and Red All Over? A Marxist Magazine," Roger Ricklefs announced to the readers of *The Wall Street Journal* on April 10, 1978, the impending publication of *Marxist Perspectives*. What caught the attention of the leading business newspaper in the United States was not so much the political content of the journal — after all, Marxist magazines are like weeds in Springtime: they creep out of the strangest places with the regularity of weather patterns. What was novel was the massive marketing blitz with which it began. According to Ricklefs, "the magazine has bought mailing lists, has sent out 50,000 subscription solicitations and even has

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hired a New York public relations and fund-raising firm." In an almost unprecedented verification of the efficacy of capitalist techniques, this approach worked beyond everyone's wildest expectations: "to date supporters have contributed $34,000."

But as with all well-planned marketing strategies, this new "product" had to be at least minimally tailored to conform to the needs of its intended audience. American pluralism had to be accommodated. Thus, "the new magazine will even publish anti-Marxist scholarship on a regular basis." No profound analysis was needed to explain the ideological shift. The projected readership did not in the least resemble a well-disciplined revolutionary cadre: "although some are political activists, others view Marxism largely as an intellectual tool." This was not entirely unexpected. As with other aging revolutionary theories, Marxism had long ago traded in the machine gun for the more respected cap and gown, and a place in which to retire, peacefully living out its lingering political senility.

Yet, in spite of such an inauspicious commodified beginning, *Marxist Perspectives* did manage to publish interesting material — more often than not in the special section farmed out to the class enemy: "From the Other Shore." But this section itself was symptomatic of the nature of the undertaking. The seemingly innocent characterization of "the other shore" already betrayed that subtle dogmatism that was to eventually wreck the project. The truth of the matter is that there is no such thing as a Marxist "this shore," sufficiently well-defined and able to be contraposed to "that other shore." Ever since Lenin tried to shove the infamous 21 points down the throat of all aspiring communist parties, everyone has known that to assume Marxism to be even a minimally unified discipline is a worn-out Bolshevik trick to impose a non-existent theoretical hegemony on a variety of Marxist interpretations that cannot be brought together under a single banner other than by means of the KGB or its functional equivalent. Since the shakeup of the Second International with World War I a more accurate geographical analogy of the two shores inexorably confronting each other would be an archipelago where it is impossible to tell the class character of any of the more or less insignificant atolls. In the end, the professed pluralism in the journal's title clashed with the dogmatism implicit in its realization. So, after 10 issues, on February 1, 1981, *The New York Times* informed the world that the academic adventure was over. True to form, however, "*Marxist Perspectives* did not expire for lack of funds," but because of unresolvable "staff disagreements."

In spite of its sleek business profile, largely because of Genovese's relentless editorship, the journal did succeed in making Marxism respectable within previously inbred and cretinized academic disciplines. But of all the alleged Marxist perspectives represented, one in particular stands out by its prominent absence: the New Left, or more broadly, Western Marxism. Fitting neither in the Marxist nor on the "other" shore, Western Marxism became a kind of lost theoretical continent — or, better, one that *Marxist Perspectives* would have liked to see disappear from the map. Paradoxically, however, in the 1960s it had been Marcuse and not Engels who had caught the students' imaginations. It was the cultural revolution rather than the united front that had had the most profound impact. It was the Frankfurt School, not Trotskyism or even Gus Hall and Angela Davis, that had precipitated a revival of interest in that Marxism buried by the administrative measures of Cold War ideologists. Thus, *Marxist Perspectives* successfully cashed in on the demand for radical ideas created by the New Left by recycling the long-since discredited Old Left ideology served up in pseudo-pluralistic academic Tupperware.

Badly cushioned by relatively insipid poems, the familiar rattle of the nuts and

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bolts of peculiarly orthodox and mechanical Marxism in the journal turned out to be well in tune with the positivistic chatter of mainstream academia in those humanities and social sciences that had long ago become research arms of the state bureaucratic apparatus. Politically harmless and intellectually irrelevant, the Marxism so legitimated sold well also among nostalgic old-leftists trying to theoretically re-live the misadventures of their frontist youth, within the safe confines of academic respectability. It caught on, however, mainly with those young academics who had come of age in the late 1960s and who sought both respectability and radical glamour. But the outlook remained distinctly 1930-ish. Thus, Trotskyist dinosaurs such as Mandel could attack Eurocommunism for not being sufficiently Marxist; Marzani could read all sorts of pro-communist leanings into the Catholic Church's relations to radical politics, while a string of fashionable feminists could endlessly seek to square the circle of sex with class, or to show the insufficiently political character of the private. As the orthodox counter-revolution on the wake of the cultural radicalism of the 1960s, *Marxist Perspectives* succeeded in legitimating Marxism, but at the expense of the emancipatory radical spirit that had made its reappearance possible. It died of complications resulting from a chronic dogmatism unable ultimately to adapt to the new pluralistic climate. May it rest in peace in the sunnier parts of purgatory — or of university libraries — reserved for old communists who sold their revolutionary birthrights for a neo-Stalinist bowl of porridge.

The demise of *Marxist Perspectives,* however, does not mean the sudden end of that curious recent phenomenon of the academization of Marxism and, consequently, the proliferation of Marxist journals. In fact, even before *Marxist Perspectives* bit the dust, two new Marxist journals began publication to join those old faithfuls which had plodded their way through the 1960s and 1970s seeking a socialist outcome for a class struggle that never quite materialized. *Thesis Eleven* and *Contemporary Marxism* have appeared to testify to the intensification of the falling rate of intelligence among academic Marxists exhibiting all of the shortcomings but none of the high scholarly standards of *Marxist Perspectives.*

In 1844, while still a relatively green but utterly arrogant philosophy student, Marx may have been excused for writing something as dubious as the eleventh thesis on Feuerbach — after all, he probably realized the error of his ways since he never even tried to publish it. But in 1980 the same cannot be said for a journal that has chosen such a thesis for its title and guiding principle. Upon close examination, the thesis does not make much sense. First, it presupposes the pretentious and historically inaccurate claim that Marx and Marxist philosophers are the only ones who ever thought of changing the world while, in fact, from Plato's *Republic* down to the present, most philosophy has consisted of projects for social reconstruction — even if that reconstruction means strengthening an existing but deteriorating system of "class oppression." Secondly, the thesis is also wrong from a more developed Marxist perspective whereby all interpretation is seen as mediation, therefore selective reconstruction and the projection of determinate choices which, far from being neutral, are meant to legitimate the onesidedness of the consequences of those choices as themselves neutral. Thirdly, if philosophy as such is seen as a neutral and inconsequential appropriation of the given, then the burden for determining change shifts to others, presumably non-philosophical dimensions, thus precipitating the formation of an anti-philosophical or even irrational world view.

But even if the eleventh thesis did make good philosophical sense, a cursory examination of *Thesis Eleven* readily shows that the journal's political relevance falls

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somewhere in between the *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie* or *Voprosi Filosofi*, on the one hand, and *Arena* or *Rivista di Filosofia Neo-Scolastica* on the other.

The lead article — a museum piece of purely archaeological interest written in 1974 and probably rejected by several responsible journals at that time — seriously proposes to distinguish between skeletal, anatomical, physiological and spectral Marxisms. This scholastic schema may be appealing to the few Marxist students frequenting medical schools, but will take an inveterate witch doctor to translate politically into anything.

Although written by an internationally known scholar, Agnes Heller, the second article is even older. It had already appeared in an absurdly overpriced Canadian journal published in Holland and with a name suspiciously reminiscent of *Thesis Eleven*'s theoretical pretensions: *Social Praxis* (before its move from Florida, where it originated, it was called *Social Theory and Social Praxis*, with the *Social Theory* presumably remaining in Florida when *Social Praxis* went north!). But copies of this article in various languages had been known to circulate privately over ten years ago — and judging from the content it must have been written much earlier, well before the author developed her theory of radical needs or the critique of the seemingly Husserlian but actually Leninist notion of the philosopher as "the functionary of mankind." It may be that, like vintage wines, some philosophy improves with age. But this article, if anything, has turned to vinegar. Take the opening sentence: "Radical utopia is *per definitionem* future-oriented." What, besides some residual scholastic constipation, does *per definitionem* — along with the other *in concretos* or *ex principios* littering the article — convey that would be lost by using the less pretentious "by definition" or "concretely" or "in principle"? Aside from scores of similar stylistic embarrassments that the editors should have eliminated, the more serious problem has to do with the content. Several years ago, when the author realized that the concept of radical utopia could not be grounded in an updated Aristotelean ethics, she developed a theory of needs which, however, turned out to be equally problematic. Unlike Eastern Europe where this article and the subsequent theory of needs were originally formulated, in the West the culture industry successfully manipulates needs in such a way that no radical variants, able to subsequently ground radical philosophy and radical utopia, can readily develop on their own, thus forcing the matter either into a much-despised Jacobin position she has long since rejected, or into accepting an abstract utopianism with no possibility for realization. If such an unenviable theoretical quandary is the result of Heller's otherwise brilliant intellectual development over the last 15 years, to publish this ancient document about radical utopia now without further elaborating her subsequent development is intellectually dishonest and demeaning to *Thesis Eleven* readers, cast in the role of baby idiots not deserving the latest goods, but only obsolete and transcended prototypes.

If readers have not fallen into a deep slumber by the time they reach the third article, Arnason's Sominex Marxism is guaranteed to do the trick. It is an eclectic grab-bag of occasionally incompatible ideas thrown together in the effort to resuscitate some form of Marxist orthodoxy able to withstand Castoriadis' devastating criticism. Poorly documented, pedantically written and sloppily argued, this piece does not even begin to provide an adequate answer to the question raised and ends up with an act of faith in the viability of a renewed Marxist project. The same can be said of the Markus and the Backhaus articles, which exhibit all the defects of irrelevant and long since transcended Marxist scholasticism. It must take an immense amount of Australian imagination to see any of these articles as even remotely "relevant" to political issues of any sort.

The two more immediately political pieces dealing with Left Communism in

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Australia and the work of an obscure labor historian are also disguised scholastic exercises. One, well-documented and carefully written, ends up with the scatter-brained ouvrierism of a Tronti (more on this later) without even mentioning the real problems confronting council communism, while the second bemoans an unpublished work on labor history — unpublished because, in all likelihood, this nostalgic ouvrierism has no prospective readers in Australia. The issue closes with a translation of an irrelevant document from the Italian Communist Party's archives dating back to 1924 and dealing allegedly with "the transition to socialism." But the piece is mystified by an introduction that parrots the PCI line and overlooks the fact that: (1) the rise of fascism in Italy was greatly facilitated by the very formation of the PCI in 1921 — as Clara Zetkin and Paul Levi pointed out at the time; (2) by 1924 there were no significant revolutionary options in Italy as alternatives to defensive ones; and (3) even then the Bordighean heritage, to which both Togliatti and Gramsci still vaguely adhered, had systematically frustrated any possible reconciliation with the socialists to close flanks against the fascist onslaught. It is ironic that this document is presented as a stimulation for a debate concerning the transition to socialism since it reflects a situation where the transition was really to fascism. In fact, it marks one of the first steps in the capitulation of the PCI to the Comintern after the party had adamantly backed the frontist mandates from Moscow for almost three years.

So, a journal proposing politically relevant thought ends up publishing two irrelevant theoretical relics, three utterly scholastic exercises in the worst varieties of Marxology, two meaningless exegeses in Australian labor nostalgia, and a totally obscure and misinterpreted Italian document from 1924! What leads academics into wasting their and their readers' time with this scholastic mish mash? A possible answer is that, in the absence of any meaningful political activity, this exercise in academic futility provides a political placebo to psychologically soothe the false consciousness of frustrated intellectuals aspiring to become junior Lenins. In comparison, *Marxist Perspectives* looks like a paragon of political relevance, even though the journal systematically avoided taking explicitly any particular position.

With all its defects, however, *Thesis Eleven* looks good in comparison with *Contemporary Marxism*. After all, even Marxist scholasticism, relieved of its pretenses to immediate political relevance, can have some didactic function. The same cannot be said of a journal whose sole aim is to flatten all issues into almost necessary stages of the proletariat's march to world revolution. Notwithstanding the importation of otherwise respectable foreign contributions by people such as Claudin or Amin — who probably would refuse to appear in such a dogmatic publication were they more familiar with it — the journal is a throwback on the most crude 1930 communist propaganda. While no one could ever question the commitment to scholarly excellence and intellectual honesty of *Marxist Perspectives* or *Thesis Eleven*, the same cannot be said of *Contemporary Marxism*. With this new journal, whose content is not worth examining in any detail, the involution of that Marxism resuscitated in the late 1960s is not complete. Marxism-Leninism is now back to the embarrassing low level of debate that almost spelled out its extinction in the United States 30 to 40 years ago.

This process of intellectual disintegration, however, is not restricted only to the United States and Australia, but extends to Europe as well. One need only examine one of the newest Marxist journals in Italy to realize its full extent. After almost a year of advance fanfare in the Italian press, a group of communist intellectuals led by Mario Tronti has finally launched a new journal. There had been rumors of growing friction between intellectuals and the leadership within the party so that, with this

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new journal, one would have expected some efforts to explore controversial themes such as the inherent limitations and internal contradictions of Eurocommunism, the perversities of "really existing socialism," the growing irrelevance — if not incompatibility — of Marxism to human emancipation, etc. Thus, it comes as a surprise that Tronti and Co. have given birth to an innocuous sounding organ called *Laboratorio Politico*. Indeed, the title and prophylactic format are indicative of the sterility which informs the project — one which has no intention of going beyond ouvrierist orthodoxy, other than by alchemizing its Marxism with mainline American political science.

Laboratorio Politico contains more references to the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research, the Brookings Institute, the American Enterprise Institute, or even, of all things, the world reknowned *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, than even the most conventional American political scientist would cite when writing for the *American Journal of Political Science*. What is going on here? Why has this group of "revolutionary" intellectuals decided to bypass the PCI's relatively open and theoretically sophisticated organs to merely publish the same sort of bland essays that for years have been appearing in establishment Italian social science journals such as *Il Mulino*? Why has one of Italy's most respected bourgeois presses, Einaudi, published *Laboratorio Politico*, and such prominent American political scientists — hardly radical, such as Susan Berger and Sidney Tarrow — joined the operation? Why do (some) essays' abstracts appear in English when *Laboratorio Politico* is produced for Italian consumption and when few non-Italians, apart from some foreign specialists, are likely to read it?

The answer is twofold. First, American political science, combined with the Einaudi affiliation, adds a veneer of legitimacy which the founding group otherwise lacks. Second, having long since rejected any kind of Gramscian heritage, the group needs some grounding for the usually anti-intellectual ouvrierism which paradoxically senses greater affinity for social science positivism than for any variants of Marxism. Thus, *Laboratorio Politico* is not simply an exercise in ecumenicalism, or, as Tronti puts it in the lead essay, open to theories and specialized competencies "outside our camp of organization and struggle," but rather the search for an objective "science" that might serve the proletariat in its quest for state power as well as it has served the bourgeoisie. As it is claimed in poor English in the summaries, "If it succeeds in relating itself to a return to theoretical reflection and historical reconstruction around the institution of executive power, comparative analysis, on an international scale above the differences of particular systems, might perhaps be the only means capable of still producing knowledge." The poverty of intellect which guides the *Laboratorio Politico* project is only matched by the group's Orwellian self-understanding. "To get theories and researches together, into a Political Workshop: a common effort of different know-hows, through each issue, to focus on one problem, for an understanding which goes beyond its traditional outlook; besides, the key word of the problem, for a criticism of the core of its conceptual framework; and the *data*, facts and acts which make up for the structure of the problem; eventually, shorter flashes to anticipate future trends of analysis. A Workshop on politics through political science; not just a target but a structure for a possible way of organizing an intellectual stand on the left; a collective mind which pleads for no synthesis, working out its own way through a double emphasis on engagements and disenchantment." Here the grammatical mess fully reflects something even worse at the conceptual level.

Despite the pomposity which characterizes Tronti's statement of the *Laboratorio*

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project ("To Seek, To Think, To Work on Politics"), the journal's contents are an eclectic smorgasbord of unrelated and quite conventional dishes, rather than a rigorous treatment of a common theme from various perspectives. Perhaps this is the true meaning of "a collective mind which pleads for no synthesis," though the same could be said about psychotics and other mental incompetents. In fact, there is not tension between the separate essays, no internal debate where positions might be defended and sharpened, no suggestion as to what new problems emerged from the enterprise which calls for further elucidation and analysis. Some workshop.

There are two serious pieces of social science: an essay by Princeton professor Ezra Suleiman on the internal composition and workings of ministerial staffs in France; and an analysis of the increased use of "emergency law" legislation in Italy by Franco Cazzola and Massimo Morisi. The first is simply an extract from Suleiman's celebrated book on the French administrative elite which has been already fully discussed in Europe and America for the last six years. The second should eventually be reprinted in some serious political science journal rather than remain buried in a misconceived *gauchiste* journal on the way to premature but well-deserved extinction. Other essays are at best half-baked and at worst go nowhere, despite the conspicuous use of terms such as input-output, interest aggregation, government from above, mass mobilization, as well as references to standard warhorses like Verba and Nie's *Participation and Political Equality* or Campbell's *The American Voter.*

To understand the real political profile of *Laboratorio Politico* one has to wade through the last two articles, which, interestingly enough, have not been provided with English summaries. After all, Tronti's vacuous introduction provides no clues and simply recycles the same empty slogans with which he has built a career: appropriate bourgeois thought, figure out what the real working class is doing, etc. But in the last piece Rita di Leo and Ottorino Cappelli formally let the Stalinist cat out of the mainline political science bag with their analysis of the Polish events. Since they consider the Soviet Union and East European countries working class states, the Solidarity challenge is simply compared to what they regard as a "spontaneous" Stakhanovist movement to regulate the system. That the whole Stakhanovist campaign in the 1930s was carefully manipulated from above by a corrupt and cynical apparatus never occurs to these alleged Soviet specialists. No winds of new class theory have yet blown their way, stuck as they are in old 1950s American political science. Thus, the "working class" government in Poland needs periodic spontaneous reminders by the working class to keep it on its toes.

The plot begins to unfold. The American political science camouflage not only substitutes whatever alternative Marxist approaches to social reality they have rejected, but also attempts to legitimate the crudest defenses of Stalinism. An alienated methodology is called to apologize for the worst form of social-fascism in the 20th century. *Laboratorio Politico* — translated more accurately as *Political Laboratory* than as *Workshop* — is thus meant to produce the same old and discredited Stalinist Frankensteins, but this time in the sleek scientific clothing of American political science. Within this context, the loss of *Marxist Perspectives* takes on the character of an ideological catastrophe. Despite all its flaws, it still rated as one of the most intelligent orthodox Marxist journals of the late 1970s — and, apparently, of the foreseeable future.

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TOWARDS A CRITIQUE OF THE FRENCH IDEOLOGY*

by Amedeo Vigorelli

The "Nietzsche Renaissance"

If "Back to Marx!" was the slogan of the sixties, the seventies will probably be remembered for the return to Nietzsche.[1] This is not purely a cultural phenomenon but one rooted in what one may call "common sense" and, as such, involves ideology. France always seems to be the source of new trends: previously Althusser's *For Marx* was seen as a theoretical breakthrough, and now Foucault's *Microphysics of Power* and Deleuze's and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus* are seen in similar light.[2] The use of genealogy against the dialectic, the archeology of knowledge instead of the critique of political economy and ideology, the body displacing "class": it is difficult to imagine a sharper break with Marx. These analyses, however, cannot be readily dismissed.

First of all, it is not Marx but Hegel who is under attack — especially that notion of the "Hegelian dialectic" so mistreated by 20th century philosophy. Secondly (and this is what distinguishes the current Nietzsche renaissance from past ones), the Nietzsche revival does not take place in the name of idealism or spiritualism, but of materialism. Finally, this rediscovery takes into account most recent contributions dealing with Nietzsche which have discredited the old "irrationalistic" nonsense about him, thus presenting a picture completely different from traditional ones. All of this makes it appear as a left response to "the crisis of Marxism."[3] Are there any relations between the current "Nietzsche renaissance" and the "return to Marx" during the sixties? From this viewpoint, it is important to grasp some important changes in the contraposition of materialism and idealism or of rationalism and irrationalism in order to answer the question of whether there is a "French ideology" and, if so, what it means.[4]

*English translation by Greg Ostrander.

1. Among the numerous works that have inaugurated the Italian "Nietzsche renaissance" of the seventies, see G. Vattimo, *Ipotesi su Nietzsche* (Turin, 1967) and *Il Soggetto e la Maschera. Nietzsche e il Problema della Liberazione* (Milan, 1974). For a bibliography of Italian writings on Nietzsche see M.S. Stefani, *Nietzsche in Italia (1893-1970)* (Assisi-Roma, 1975), and R. Amà, D. Cervi, *Linee di una Bibliografia Italiana su Nietzsche (1892-1975)* in the appeandix to Antonio Banfi, *Introduzione a Nietzsche* (Milan, 1977).

2. For an early analysis of recent French production (which revolves around Lacan, Deleuze and Foucault) denouncing the regressive political thrust of "leftist Lacanianism," was F. Rella, *Il Mito dell'Altro* (Milan, 1978). See also his "Introduction" to G. Deleuze, *Nitezsche* (Verona, 1977).

3. See G. Vattimo, "Gli Studi su Nietzsche dal 1945 a oggi," in *Cultura e scuola,* no. 19 (1966). One of the first to argue for the incompatibility of Nietzsche with racism and anti-semitism was G. Bataille in his *Nitezsche. Il Culmine e il Possibile* (Milan, 1970). See also the appendix "Nietzsche e i Fascisti" in Deleuze's above mentioned volume. By emphasizing the heterogeneity of Nietzsche's thought, Bataille has ruled out any instrumentalization either by the left or by the right. More recent works, however, have developed a "leftist" sanctification of Nietzsche by forgetting certain obvious facts of his life. This is especially the case of Vattimo who ends up with a proletarianized Nietzsche which is just as fictitious as previous right-wing accounts of Nietzsche. See, however, his self-criticism in his "Introduction" to Nietzsche, *Gaia Scienza* (Turin, 1979).

4. Most recent Marxist discussions have gone beyond Lukacs' evaluation of Nietzsche in his *Destruction of Reason.* See Massimo Cacciari, *Pensiero Negativo e Razionalizzazione* (Padova, 1977) and especially his *Krisis. Saggio sul Pensiero Negativo da Nietzsche a Wittgenstein* (Milan, 1976). Cacciari re-examines Nietzsche within the context of the "crisis" of neo-classical rationality from Mach to Wittgenstein, from Weber to Freud, etc. If this avoids the problem of ideological reading of Nietzsche, it tends to result in a sometimes annoying confusion of interpretive levels. With regard to Nietzsche, for example, it seems that the location of his thought within such a framework is derived more from a pre-conceived notion of negative thought (dating back to Heidegger and superimposed on the analyses) than from a careful analysis.

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The main reef against which Althusserianism ultimately shipwrecked was the relation of theory to real political practice.[5] If Althusser was correct to react against the empiricism and opportunism of communist politics during the fifties, his excessively theoreticist solution was destined to produce a new and more vicious form of empiricism. It is in the work of the more academic philosophers, the same who tried to make up for lost time by presenting themselves as the movements' new "master thinkers," that the empiricist reaction sought to contrapose Kant to Hegel, and Nietzsche to Marx.[6] As can be seen by analyzing Deleuze's position, however, what is involved is a bourgeois "materialism" of a Kantian variety which remains caught in the empirical and, as such, succumbs to the predominant scientism (which it tries to avoid by means of Freud's original contribution).[7]

Marxism has interpreted irrationalism and idealism on the one hand, and rationalism or materialism on the other, as being substantially equivalent.[8] Thus, during the 1930s, the main enemy, idealism, was seen as an irrational reaction against science and reason, or as the negation of human progress. Lost from view was the close relation that bourgeois ideology was weaving with scientism and positivism (much more functional to capitalist rationalization). In modern philosophy, rationalism developed as part of the struggle of scientific materialism against religious spiritualism (idealism). Already at this level, however, the development of an authentic materialist philosophy was challenged by the contemporary development of bourgeois juridical ideology (centered on the abstract notion of the Subject), which constitutes its premise and deflects its outcome in an idealist direction. Beginning with positivism, the decline of the anti-religious polemic and of the attack against the materialist conception of history, the contraposition between science and religion, or science and idealism has gradually lost significance. Scientism and irrationalism thus become the new form of the predominant ideology. The idealistic reaction against science is an obsolete form of irrationalism and the fundamental enemy today is positivism or neo-positivism.

Marxism's failure to realize this[9] and its tendency to fall back on a naive rationalism, have allowed the holes left open by an inadequate critique of scienticism to be filled with pseudo-materialist ideologies. Thus, the previous opposition between the materialism of the masses and the idealism of high culture, is now reversed in the opposition between

5. On this point, see A. Lipietz, *Da Althusser a Mao?* (Milan, 1977) and J. Rancière, *Ideologia e Politica in Althusser* (Milan, 1974). See also Althusser's self-criticism in *Elementi di Autocrita* (Milan, 1976). Also useful is D. Lindenberg, *Il Marxismo Introvabile* (Turin, 1978).

6. In *Differenza e Ripetizione* (Bologna, 1971), G. Deleuze offers the following surprising definition of empiricism: "Empiricism is not at all a reaction against concepts, nor a simple appeal to live experience. It brings about, on the contrary, the craziest creation of concepts that has ever been seen or understood. Empiricism is the mysticism of the concept, its mathematicism" (*Ibid.*, p. 6). It may not be accidental that his first book was entitled, *Empirisme et Subjectivité* (1953). with regards to the return to Kant, also see G. Deleuze, *La Filosofia Critica di Kant* (Bologna, 1979), an academic essay on the doctrine of faculties influenced by Heidegger's fundamental ontology.

7. Beside those of Nietzsche and Marx, Freud's name appears for the first time in Foucault's contribution to the international philosophical colloquium of Royaumont in 1964 (Paris, 1967). The encounter between Marxism and psychoanalysis took place in the name of Lacan, as well as Nietzsche. Lacan's importance for Deleuze and Foucault is discussed by Rella, *op.cit.* Rella shows how Lacan's efforts consists of "the return of Freud to classical philosophical discourse."

8. See E. Balibar, "Irrationalism and Marxism" in *New Left Review* (January-February, 1978).

9. In an attack on Balibar, Quiniou still defends the basic identity between materialism and rationalism within Marxism. See Y. Quiniou, "Le Marxisme comme Rationalisme Thèorique" in *La Pensée*, n. 203 (1979).

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the "materialism" of high culture and the idealistic subculture of the masses.[10] Those who are bothered today by the new wave of "irrationalism" and the return to Nietzsche, have not understood that the real enemy of materialism is positivist and scientistic ideology. What is in question here is not the interpretation of Nietzsche's philosophy, but rather its possible ideological use. A critique of the new left radicalism that today wears a Nietzschean garb, can prevent new and misleading instrumentalizations of Nietzsche.

To answer the initial question concerning the relation of the return to Marx of the sixties and the "Nietzsche renaissance" of the seventies, there is more than one reason for correlating the two phenomena. The partiality of the Althusserian re-reading of Marx facilitated a resurgence of a more sophisticated empiricism. The recycling of Nietzsche must be located within this context. Having discounted Nietzsche's openly "irrationalistic" aspects, the attempt to reground the rationalist and positivist *Westanschauung* becomes evident.[11]

Deleuze's Nietzsche

The publication of Deleuze's *Nietzsche* signalled a turn in French studies of Nietzsche. Following on the wake of an illustrious academic tradition, Deleuze proposed a hermeneutic reading of Nietzsche, based on that concept of genealogy that was to enjoy such a popularity in the following years. In his introduction to the Italian edition, Vattimo has indicated the analogies between this interpretation and Heidegger's.[12] Yet, whereas Heidegger, in the effort to overturn the tradition of Western metaphysical thought, dialecticizes Nietzsche's philosophy in order to present it as the utmost expression of that tradition, Deleuze emphasizes Nietzschean philosophy's positive elements which are opposed to that tradition. For Heidegger, the philosopher of irrationalism is the last expression of dialectical thought. If the destiny of modern philosophy is in the fulfillment of metaphysics as subjectivism, Nietzsche is the philosopher who has done this most radically by means of the superman as the man of

10. This is a psychoanalytic-linguistic "materialism" incorporating post-structuralism and post-Lacanianism. The most significant symptom of this is the hegemony enjoyed by the journal *Tel Quel* in France around 1968. This journal has published some of the most important contributions of the new theoretical efforts inspired by Foucault, Barthes and Derrida, but also by Lacan and Althusser. See the documents of the colloquium at Cluny, *Theorie d'Ensemble* (Paris, 1968) with writings by Foucault, Barthes, Derrida, Sollers, Kristeva, Baudry, Rottenberg, Goux, Thibaudeau. Roche. Ricardou, Riset. and Houdebine.

11. G. Colli and M. Montinari especially emphasize the danger of "instrumentalizing" Nietzsche. Their contributions are among the most accurate of the recent "Nietzsche renaissance." In his excellent book *Dopo Nietzsche* (Milan, 1974), Colli argues for the need to go beyond Nietzsche by recuperating the original meaning of philosophy as a dialogical and intersubjective value which, in its dimension of an intimate and esoteric possession, escapes the power of ideology. Montinari [*Che Cosa ha "Veramente" detto Nietzsche* [Rome, 1975]), although attacking the Nietzsche "fashion," insists less on the esoteric-wisdom dimension of philosophy, and grants the possibility of a recuperation of his though by a democratic-pluralist discourse. Also, see F. Masini, *Lo Scriba del Caos. Interpretazione di Nietzsche* (Bologna, 1978) in which the impossibility of a reconciliation between Nietzsche and Marx is convincingly demonstrated.

12. G. Deleuze, *Nietzsche et la Philosophie* (Paris, 1962), Italian translation, Florence, 1978. The above mentioned academic tradition is that of the radical socialist university of the late nineteenth century. See, for example, the major biography of Nietzsche, C. Andler's *Nietzsche, sa Vie, sa Pensée*, 6 volumes (Paris, 1920-31). For works influences by Deleuze, see P. Granier, *Le Probleme de la Verite dans la Philosophie de Nietzsche* (Paris, 1971). This linguistic hermeneutic reading of Nietzsche finds in the Nietzschean text that psychoanalytic-linguistic "deconstruction" that he considers the German philosopher's real revolutionary heritage.

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technique, the eternal recurrence as the "end" of historicism and the will to power as the world domination of instrumental rationality. Although he shares with Heidegger both the rejection of Nietzsche's "irrationalism" as well as the effort to return the Nietzschean *Nachlass* to its real meaning, Deleuze's interpretation seems less revolutionary and more faithful to Nietzsche's texts.

Deleuze focuses his analysis on the Nietzschean concept of genealogy with all its anti-metaphysical implications. Geneology reverses metaphysical questioning by substituting the questioner's "who?" for the questioned "what?" Reality thus loses its metaphysical substratum and can be resolved only in terms of the changeable becoming of its appearances. Nietzsche thus relaunches the Kantian project of a critique of dialectical reason and the vindication of the rights of the multiplicity. Genealogy no longer recognizes dialectical oppositions or negations, but only repetitive differences. By emphasizing the differential character of geneological concepts, Deleuze considers himself beyond the dialectical tradition that, from Plato to Hegel, has dominated Western philosophy. He thinks that he has checkmated idealism without attempting the impossible task of transcending it. He sees Nietzsche as the only authentically "materialistic" philosopher who unambiguously vindicates the rights of appearance and multiplicity. Nietzsche is also the only one to have understood the meaning of the "tragic," successfully opposing the moral consequences of dialectical thought and rediscovering the affirmative meaning of life and knowledge. Those who, like Heidegger, stop at the nihilistic moment of his philosophy and interpret the will to power subjectivistically as the will to dominate, misunderstand the genealogical method. Genealogy does not mean merely the difference between forces, but the different quality of the forces in play, whether affirmative or negative, active or reactive. To interpret Nietzsche as a thinker of domination is to grasp only the reactive aspect of nihilism without seeing its possible active meaning. Nietzsche is rather the philosopher of vital affirmation, of object-less desire, of free creativity and of destruction (which takes the place of the dialectical "negation"). Thus, an analogy to the will to power can be found in the realm of art (or in the delirious liberation of schizophrenia, as *Anti-Oedipus* will argue). Three points are central: the emphasis of the anti-Hegelian motives of Nietzsche's philosophy and their relations to Kantian "criticism"; the psychological interpretation of "resentment" and its relation to Freud; and the problem of science in relation to positivism.

From the first page of the book Deleuze focuses on Nietzsche's "aggressive anti-Hegelianism." The opposition to the dialectic is in full accord with the vindication of a radical empiricist pluralism. In the place of contradiction (which does not avoid the imperialism of the concept), Nietzsche substitutes difference. In place of negative power (the work of the concept), he stresses positive affirmation. Since the dialectic as the essential structure of recognition is nothing but the relation between forces expressed from the slave's perspective, the latter is replaced by the joyous affirmation of the force and aggressive position of a difference conceivable only from the master's viewpoint. Behind this account of the Hegelian dialectic it is not difficult to identify the illustrious French interpretive tradition of Kojève and Hyppolite.[13] If the central figure of recog-

13. This tradition can be seen as begun by J. Wahl's *La Malheur de la Conscience dans la Philosophie de Hegel* (Paris, 1929). Focusing on an anthropological dialectical schema emphasizing the notions of the subject and of alienation — one which has been predominant even within Marxism (e.g., Lukacs) — this interpretation is transcended by more recent ones emphasizing the anti-theological tendencies in Hegel's *Logic*. For the Marxist account, see Louis Althusser, "Sul rapporto fra Marx ed Hegel" in *Lenin e la Filosofia* (Milan, 1969). See also Biagio De Giovanni, *Hegel e il Tempo Storico della Società Borghese* (Bari, 1970). Even in this respect the Deleuzian reading of Nietzsche runs into difficulties which have already been largely overcome.

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nition (the master-slave dialectic), and its inevitable product (the unhappy consciousness of the Christian-bourgeois tradition), are the core of the Hegelian dialectic, then Nietzsche has destructively penetrated the essence of the dialectic by grasping its necessary link with the reactive and nihilistic forces of resentment. Before Nietzsche, only Stirner succeeded in grasping the nihilistic consequences of the dialectical principle by means of his philosophy of the unique. Marx's error was to oppose such a slipping of the Hegelian dialectic in the direction of individualism and nihilism. Thus with his own optimistic and humanistic philosophy, he ended up marking the last stage of the dialectical journey, the "proletarian stage," rather than taking with Nietzsche such a nihilism to the extreme consequences of a self-suppression.[14]

By rejecting the dialectical solution of the problem of man and introducing his new philosophy of the superman, Nietzsche could not avoid returning to Kant's critical perspective. But whereas Kant limited his critique to the false pretenses of a metaphysical knowledge, without discussing the pretense of knowledge and truth in general, Nietzsche went further. He also destroyed this last metaphysical "faith" and resolved the truth of the world into the infinite process of interpretation. Genealogy is the new form of the critical process, which is even more radical than Kant's rational radicalism. It is not limited to judging the rationality of phenomena, but since the genealogist is a philosopher-prophet, it anticipates the new values from whose viewpoint phenomena will be affirmed. Rather than judging life, the philosopher should invent new possibilities of life: he must negate reason (*ratio*) in order to affirm life. Is this a vitalistic irrationalism? Deleuze denies it, arguing that what opposes thought is always thought and not something extrinsic to it, and that the reference to Kant protects the genealogical project from any romantic or vitalistic outcome. But what remains of Kant if his rationalistic radicalism is disengaged from the "pathos" of Truth and Reason, and change it into an affirmation of multiplicity? This result appears even more disappointing when compared with the initial "aggressive anti-Hegelianism." The account began by rejecting any peaceful or conciliatory vision of the real as found in the Hegelian dialectic of recognition. Because of this, the Marxist solution had been rejected as overly conditioned by the bourgeois logic of appropriation. Thus, it was back to Kant and to the radicalism of his critical project. All of this only to end up with another "philosophy of becoming!" Here is this music of becoming from Deleuze's own voice: "The critical instance is the will to power. But in what form? Not the superman who is in fact the positive product of the critique. But there is a relatively superhuman type: the critical type, man to the extent that he wants to be overcome, surpassed. . . ." "You could transform yourselves into the superman's fathers and ancestors: this would be your best work."[15] Frankly, even Kant seems more revolutionary when he asks: "What can I hope for?"

As for the second point, i.e., the psychological interpretation of resentment and the

14. G. Deleuze, *Nietzsche e la Filosofia, op.cit.*, pp. 226-227 and note 37, pp. 287-288. Consider Deleuze's naively evolutionist and optimistic interpretation of Marx's thought, according to which "the species and the individual, generic and particular being, the social and the egoistic, are reconciled in the ego conditioned by historical and social relations" (*ibid.*, p. 226). This indicates that Deleuze's knowledge of Marx stops at the *German Ideology* (1845) and does not include the *Grundrisse* or *Capital*. The real problem concerns Deleuze's conception of the self-suppression or self-overcoming of nihilism that occurs through a kind of active "annihilation." This "pushing to extremes" of nihilism is to replace the dialectical "negation." Now, if this notion is to be more than an empty sophism, it can only allude to a disguised dialectic (more Fichtean than Hegelian) and not to its overcoming.

15. Deleuze, *op.cit.*, p. 140.

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link between Nietzsche and Freud established by Deleuze, a few observations will suffice. In one of the best parts of the book, Deleuze dedicates a scrupulous and exhausting analysis to the phenomenology of resentment. The point is to free one of Nietzsche's central concerns from the mortgages (embodied in the Nietzschean starting point) of a crude positivism. Disentangled from the original naturalistic framework of a "chemistry of moral sentiments," the principle of resentment assumes the role of an explanatory "topological hypothesis" of the human psyche's fundamental mechanisms. Like Freud, Nietzsche allegedly interprets psychic life according to a topological schema: one system receives a stimulation and another one preserves a trace of it. The first is consciousness (as the faculty of reception and forgetting), the second is the unconscious (as the faculty that retains and elaborates memory traces). Resentment is born out of a displacement, of the reactive forces which normally "work" consciousness. Consciousness is "invaded" by memory traces and loses its receptivity to external stimuli as well as the ability to forget (which normally alone allows it to "work" its own reactions, i.e., to actively respond to stimuli). The man of resentment appears dominated by a formidable memory which prevents him from "absorbing" the external stimuli and elaborating responses. His behavior is purely reactive and unable to distinguish the stimulus from the trace. He is truly neurotic. It is not merely that resentment is an illness: illness itself is a form of resentment. In a note, Deleuze answers the facile objection that he has transformed Nietzsche into a predecessor of Freudian psychoanalysis. While recognizing that it is not possible to speak of Nietzsche's influence on Freud, Deleuze argues that there is an analogy between the two doctrines according to an interpretive line (Otto Rank) emphasizing the naturalistic matrix common to their thought. What Nietzsche allegedly rejected from Freud's psychoanalysis, is the concept of sublimation since it would have appeared to him as a "reactive" concept, unable to ground the real active level of psychic life: the will to power.[16]

This assimilation of Nietzsche and Freud comes at the price of emphasizing the more naturalistic and crudely positivistic elements undeniably present in the founder of psychoanalysis. This seems to contradict Deleuze's intention to transform resentment from a naturalistic hypothesis of moral sentiments, into a more general principle of psychological explanation. The discontents of civilization then turn into symptoms of colossal neurosis afflicting the history of Western thought since Socrates. Yet, this positivist assimilation of Nietzsche and Freud corresponds to the fundamental thrust of Deleuze's philosophy, marked as it is with a radical empiricism of a naturalistic variety.

This is confirmed by confronting the third and most problematic feature: the relation of Nietzsche with the science of his time, and in particular with positivistic science. Deleuze did not ignore Nietzsche's efforts to find a "scientific" confirmation for his cosmological theory of the eternal recurrence.[17] But he does not consider such attempts too important. Besides, he is quick to recognize that Nietzsche "had little competence or sympathy for science." Yet, after this claim questioning Nietzsche's views about science, Deleuze reverses himself by giving excessive emphasis to the philosophy of the *Gay Science* as a critique of positivist knowledge. What separates Nietzsche from the science of his time is his nihilistic tendency to level quantitative differences into an abstract equality. Nietzsche would not appeal (like other romantic critics after him) to

16. Deleuze, *op.cit.*, pp. 164-167 and note 6, p. 283. For the analogies between Freud's concept of sublimation and Nietzsche's will to power, see Walter Kaufmann, *Nietzsche. Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist* (Princeton, 1950).

17. On this point, see M. Montinari, *Che Cosa ha Veramente Detto Nietzsche, op.cit.*, p. 93. Schlecta emphasizes the positivist Nietzsche by focusing on Nietzsche's "middle" or "positivistic" period (*Human, all too Human, The Gay Science, Dawn*): see K. Schlecta and A. Anders, *Nietzsche. Von den verborgenen Anfängen seines Philosophieren* (Stuttgart, 1962).

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the rights of quality against quantity, but rather to the difference of quantity against abstract equality! Even if one is generous to Nietzsche, it is difficult to take seriously things such as "reactive physics," "physics of resentment" and "reactive biology." They can only be understood as products of the philosopher's simple "resentment" against the science of his time which could not provide an empirical demonstration for his "eternal recurrence." And why seek such a confirmation if one believes that "the epochs in which the scientist prevails, are epochs of weariness, often of twilight and decline"?[18] Deleuze solves the problem by arguing that, whatever Nietzsche's contradictions concerning science, they cannot seriously damage the doctrine of eternal recurrence which, far from being purely a cosmological doctrine, retains a second and more decisive ethical import. It is a selective and critical principle. If so, why devote so many pages to the analysis of the Nietzschean concept of "force," making it the focus of the genealogical doctrine, and then suddenly declare that the eternal return should be seen as a categorical imperative of the Kantian variety?[19]

Actually, the Nietzschean (and Deleuzian) critique of the concept of science plays a decisive role in the irrationalistic system of the will to power. And what kind of critique is it? As we know, Nietzsche (and Deleuze) seek to found a philosophy of difference on radical empiricist bases. The Schopenhauerian destruction of the principle of causality opened the path to a phenomenalist kind of science of which Mach was to become the most coherent exponent.[20] But rather than progressing scientifically in this direction, Nietzsche prefers to regress to a mythological and pre-scientific vision which can be described as a kind of naive Heraclitism. Thus, at the roots of eternal recurrence there is a theory of pure becoming. As for Deleuze, he inserts Nietzsche's doctrine within a critique of scientific knowledge which does refrain from recycling the worst remnants of idealism and spiritualism (from Bergson to Péguy). It is a matter of "opposing repetition to the laws of nature,"[21] of removing any kind of rigid normative obstacle, whether physical or moral, from the philosophy of becoming. Instead of criticizing positivism, he deals with an inverted image of it. To the "quantitative" and "mechanical" time of science Deleuze opposes the qualitative becoming of the Heraclitan flux: pure duration. Here is how Deleuze describes eternal recurrence: "The cyclical generalities of nature are the mask of a singularity which appears through their inferences; and under the generalities of habits in ethical life, we find singular learnings. The field of laws must be understood, but always beginning with a Nature [sic!] and a Spirit superior to the laws who weave their repetitions in the profundity of the earth and the heart where these laws do not yet exist."[22] Behind the abstract generality of science (God save us from it!) lays the singularity of a thought which wishes to be free insofar as it rejects any kind of *principium individuationis*. This is enough to make Hegel's philosophy of Nature turn pale and in fact Deleuze does not hesitate to chide Hegel for not having developed the Idea of difference (confusing it with the Idea of generality). Was it not more clear to speak of an *Elan vital*?

An Inaccessible Marxism?

"The history of Marxism cannot be separated from the global context of what we may

18. G. Deleuze, *op.cit.*, p. 115. 19. *Ibid.*, p. 107.

20. On this, see Cacciari, *Krisis, op.cit.*, who, however, assimilates the two by means of a debatable *kulturgeschichtliche* reading.

21. G. Deleuze, *Differenza e Ripetizione, op.cit.*, p. 17. For Péguy's, Bergson's and Kierkegaard's imprint in this work, see the numerous citations in the text as well as in the bibliography. To Bergson, who is probably his most important predecessor, Deleuze has dedicated a specific work, *Le Bergsonisme* (1966).

22. G. Deleuze, *Differenze Ripetizione, op.cit.*, p. 48.

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call the French ideology. Existing in many forms in universities and in the vast network of cultural apparatuses which feed on its rays, the French ideology has had various effects on the destiny of French Marxism."[23] This is how an ex-Althusserian, having lived through all the vicissitudes of the last decade of French Marxism, begins his pitiless analysis of the ideological situation in his country. The diagnosis is desperate: "In France, Marxism was still-born and this still-birth repeats itself with each generation like a ritual psychodrama."[24]

What is the French ideology, and how does it function? It is not a rigidly defined theoretical corpus, but a mobile ensemble of concepts and attitudes at the same time salvaging and disposing of Marxism. The first effort consists in the separation of "academic" from "ordinary" Marxism and the absorption of the former within academic philosophy while at the same time rejecting the latter (i.e., its political implications). But this can only take place within the context of a much broader indirect initiative providing the indispensable conceptual framework within which the confrontation with Marxism can take place.

According to Lindenberg, this clandestine work of ideology moves in two directions: in economics and in dialectical philosophy. On this level the university ideology is decisive. The removal of the "classical" origins of Marxian political economy is facilitated by an academic tradition providing a relatively stable conceptual framework within which philosophers can approach Marxism: "It is the political economy of desire that benefits from the French mathematical tradition and will supply for a long time the frameworks for the philosophers' spontaneous sociology. To see this, it is sufficient to re-read Sartre's *Critique de la Raison Dialectique* with his analyses of economic processes in terms of 'scarcity,' his theory of 'needs.' One can even see it in the resurgence of the subjectivistic theory of value in the thought of today's avant-garde (Baudrillard, Lyotard) whose sophistication must not mislead one as to the archaic character of their conceptual instruments. Basically, it is a question of still contraposing Condillac to Marx."[25] To this, we can add Deleuze's philosophy of desire which operates within the same frame of reference. Deleuze's and Guattari's "desiring machines" are but the extreme, weary disguises of *homo oeconomicus* who, as Marx wrote of Bastiat, exhibits the typical traits of "the stingy French petty bourgeois, the man who is always needy. . . ."[26]

In the common places of academic philosophy, a deep rooted anti-dialectical tendency corresponds to a subjectivistic economics. Lindenberg traces the various phases of the reception of dialectical philosophy. "Bourgeois" and "socialist" academics have devised various ways to counter Hegel: from the return to Kant, to the recycling of Nietzsche, to the "existentialist" dressing up of the philosopher from Stuttgart. This last solution has been particularly successful in that, since the thirties, Marx himself could not be dealt with outside of "the conceptual canons established by Kojève, who is also the father of the socio-political theories of Bataille and Lacan."[27] This is all the more true of Deleuze who ends up by combining all three solutions.

23. D. Lindenberg, *Il Marxismo Introvabile, op.cit.*, p. 3.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 167.
26. K. Marx, *Lineamenti Fondamentali della Critica dell'Economia Politica*, vol. II (Florence, 1970), p. 656. An in-depth analysis of these philosophies of desire and their sociological background can be found in the volume edited by M. Decaillot, E. Preteceille, and J.P. Terrail, *Besoins et Mode de Production* (Paris, 1977). See especially the essay by Terrail, "Fetichisme de las Marchandise et Idéalisme des Besoins," pp. 17-64.
27. D. Lindenberg, *op.cit.*, p. 5.

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ALVIN W. GOULDNER (1920-1980)

by John Alt

On December 15, 1980 Alvin Gouldner died in Madrid after completing a lecture tour in Europe. In recent years he had found Europe more congenial to his style and it is fitting he should have died there. The American sociological establishment had tended to ignore his critique of sociology and his efforts to construct theoretical alternatives. It came as no surprise that at the memorial service held in St. Louis December 28, not one member of the sociology department or administration of Washington University, where Gouldner had taught for 23 years, was in attendance.

Al was a giant of a man — physically, personally, intellectually. He was born in Harlem and, judging from his stories, he brawled his way through New York leftist politics during the late 30s and early 40s. Like so many New York academics of his generation, Gouldner went through City College and earned his Ph.D. in sociology at Columbia University. After sojourns at the University of Buffalo, Antioch College and the University of Illinois, he came to St. Louis in 1959, where he chaired the sociology-anthropology department, spearheaded the study of the Pruitt-Igoe housing project, launched *Trans-action*, battled Horowitz and others over the politics of sociology, was appointed Max Weber Research Professor of Social Theory, and organized *Theory and Society*. During this time, he authored eleven books and edited three others.

Gouldner was a classic entrepreneurial type who could remake the world through will, discipline and a little luck. But he also had a concern for justice. His hatred of Stalinism, structuralist theories, bureaucracy, statism, vanguard parties and the sociological establishment was testimony to a man whose spirit was always intentional and moral. In this sense, the sociology of Weber and Durkheim was his guiding inspiration.

Twenty years ago, one might have concluded that Gouldner's apprenticeship to Merton's functionalism and Lazarsfeld's positivism at Columbia had safely constrained his leftist inclinations. Like Lipset, one of Gouldner's friends during his student days, it looked as though Gouldner were on his way to getting securely grounded in the establishment ethos. Stalinism and the Popular Front, the academic popularity of Weber and Mannheim, the more American-oriented work of the exiled Institute for Social Research at Columbia (where Gouldner worked between 1944 and 1946), coupled with the prestige of Merton and Lazarsfeld, seemed to stamp Ph.D.s from Columbia's sociology department as post-Marxian functionalists and empiricists. All this was borne out in Gouldner's first publication — a study of conflict relations at a factory — which, as his dissertation, reflected his academic socialization (published as *Patterns of Industrial Bureaucracy* and *Wildcat Strike*). Weber, not Marx, inspired the focus on bureaucratic administration as the chief determinant of behavior and expectations. And it was in terms of Durkheim and Parsonian role theories that Gouldner analyzed the plant's wildcat strike: as the result of a breakdown in expectations and obligations (reciprocity) between management and labor. For the young Gouldner, the central problem was social stability and moral order, not yet domination and emancipation.

As he moved across Midwestern campuses in the 1950s, Gouldner was developing a solid reputation as a good "middle-range" functionalist interested in applied sociology.

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During this time he published *Studies in Leadership* (1950), *Durkheim's Socialism and Saint-Simon* (1958), *Notes on Technology and the Moral Order* (with Richard Peterson, 1962), *Modern Sociology* (with his second wife, Helen, 1963), and *Applied Sociology* (with S.M. Miller, 1965). Like many of his generation disillusioned with the Left, Gouldner became a Saint-Simon, seeking to eliminate dysfunctions and conflicts by fostering social stability.

Gouldner in this period saw the need for social theory to encompass concept construction as well as fact delivery, as opposed to the increasing practice of providing "value-free" facts to the establishment. As he later put it, this sociological orientation was made possible by and oriented toward the welfare state. Yet, Gouldner never gave up his concept of the role of intellectuals as a group responsible to reason and not to prevailing social interests. It became one of his major aims to create conditions that would make this possible.

In the early 1960s, he took over the sociology-anthropology department at Washington University — a liberal university in a metropolitan setting that provided him with the opportunity to undertake projects in applied sociology. Under his leadership, the department hired some of the major application-oriented sociologists in the country: Jules Henry, Charles Valentine, Irving Horowitz, Lee Rainwater and others interested in blacks, poverty and the urban crisis. Gouldner also became director of the Pruitt-Igoe Housing Research project, which received a grant of $750,000 to study social problems in public housing and to train black sociologists. He founded *Trans-action* (a fact that Horowitz would omit to mention after a long, drawn-out battle among editors that resulted in the magazine moving, with Horowitz, to Rutgers). Unlike his colleagues, however, Gouldner wrote nothing about urban social problems and played only a strong administrative role. As a result, the department became a major center for activism and attracted students interested in social change. During the Gouldner years, between 1959 and 1964, the number of graduate students increased from seven to about 75.

While involved in all this, Gouldner began his history of social thought project. In 1965, *Enter Plato* appeared, and he started work on *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology*, which was published in 1970. In the 1960s, his works had little influence on the emergent New Left and few graduate students outside St. Louis had heard of him. But word of his work spread through two late 60s articles — "Anti-Minotaur: The Myth of a Value-Free Sociology" and "The Sociologist as Partisan: Sociology and the Welfare State". (both in *For Sociology*) — which debunked positivism and repudiated sociological advocacy. "Anti-Minotaur" helped undermine the ideological pretensions of the sociological establishment. Many, however, were confused by the arguments of "The Sociologist as Partisan," for it was on the side of blacks, Vietnamese, or workers that radical students sought to define the relation between knowledge and practice. In the "Partisan" article, Gouldner argued for a Mannheimian concept of the role of intellectuals, whose obligation was to normative principles and not to particular interests. Throughout his career, Gouldner privileged normative obligations over empirical interests, and this grated the political sensibilities of the 60s generation.

The apparent contradiction between "Anti-Minotaur" and "Partisan" gives some insight into the controversies that surrounded Gouldner at Washington University. Despite his efforts to establish the department as a center of social activism, he became disheartened by the uncritical interest group advocacy and welfare state rationalization that this came to represent. Some intense political conflicts emerged between Gouldner, on the one hand, and Horowitz, Rainwater and their populist graduate students on the

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other. One famous incident occurred when Gouldner punched out one of Horowitz's graduate students in a fight that sprang from Gouldner's having criticized the research methods the student had been using. Gouldner had characterized it as excessive snooping into people's private lives; and to this, the student responded with a vicious *ad hominem* attack, which resulted in Gouldner's giving him a swift upper cut to the jaw. (The student should have read Gouldner's "The Norm of Reciprocity.") Horowitz and the university threatened to sue. Gouldner, in turn, countered by threatening to expose the dubious sexual proclivities of a number of professors. This and other incidents are behind Gouldner's reputation as abrasive and pugnacious.

In the late 60s and early 70s, relations between Gouldner and students became increasingly ambivalent. In this period the department hired a good number of Marxist professors (Heydebrand, Przeworski, Cavalcanti, Rawick, Zeitlin, Colfax and Schevitz) and attracted a large number of radical graduate students. Not surprisingly, the students tended to gravitate toward the new Marxists in the department. While actively supporting the politicization of sociology, Gouldner became increasingly critical of the liberal welfare state and of the Marxist orientation of faculty and students who respected his works as a legitimation for their efforts to politicize sociology but who were skeptical of his position in the "Partisan" article and his emphasis on social theory rather than instant activism.

While numerous students were dismayed by Gouldner's apparent lack of interest in immediate social questions, Gouldner was similarly aghast at their avoidance of social theory and intellectual pursuits. The sensibility of the period, and the students at Washington University were no exception, was a mixture of populism, anarchy and narcissism. Gouldner in contrast seemed to stand for intellectual snobbery and authoritarianism. Thus, he lacked an appreciative student audience. His theoretical concerns and aggressive personality simply did not mesh with the informal populism and casualness of the new radicals since his pride in intellectuality was falsely interpreted as egoism and his style as authoritarianism.

Yet, Gouldner liked students and drew sustenance from the new student Left. He often doubled the class time of his seminars. Following his evening lecture he usually invited students for beer and informal conversation at a local pub, and he occasionally hosted parties for them. He solicited student opinion and spent considerable time with those whom he regarded as having potential. He also respected the new student Left since he himself had been a Trotskyist in his youth. But he wanted to share what he had learned from his experiences: the obsolescence of Marxism (and later liberalism) and the implications of "thinkers" identifying with particular social agencies of change. The collapse of the student Left reinforced his growing conviction of the need for a more structured and coherent intellectual community — a conviction that led to the formation of *Theory and Society*.

The 1960s saw an evolution in Gouldner. His relation to applied and reform-oriented sociology, culminating in the heavily funded study of poverty in St. Louis and *Trans-action*, came to an end. His study of social theory led him to see through the limits of Saint-Simonian sociology. To some extent, *The Coming Crisis* was an attempt to reflect on his own career: it was an intellectual catharsis — a shedding of old ways. Gouldner was keenly interested in the American revival of Lukàcs and critical theory with which he had been associated in the 1940s. He also became a kind of senior *Telos*-fellow traveller after the journal moved to Washington University. Yet, Gouldner belonged to no school — critical theory included. His project became one of demystifying academic sociology and Marxism by providing a synthesis of both. A third

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way could only be produced through a critical dialogue between sociology and Marxism which he believed Lukàcs, the Frankfurt School, and Habermas had initiated. Given the collapse of both the sociological and the Marxian models, he rejected the possibility of a collective subject, arguing that such an historical agent had been short-circuited by bureaucracy, consumerism, and restricted language codes or, more importantly, that it was an intellectuals' construct meant to acquire particularistic hegemony through a universalized subject. Since he believed that society and everyday relations are constituted by theory and everyday knowledge, he focused on the emancipatory possibilities of rational discourse, the public sphere, and intellectuals as a new class. If intellectuals had traditionally hidden behind mystical collective subjects, then why not bring them out of the closet and have them perform in the public sphere where their ideas could be considered and debated in terms of reason and not interests? In these terms, the problem of domination became one of restricted language codes or the relegation of everyday consciousness to the "paleo-symbolic" by the cultural apparatus and consumerism. Conversely, the project of emancipation became one of gaining access to and broadening rational discourse. Because of their commitment to rational discourse and their location in the public sphere, intellectuals were assigned the task of universal emancipation.

There are two major problems with this. First, Gouldner overemphasized a linguistic dialectic at the expense of a social one, ignoring the social conditions that produce everyday needs or interests in emancipation. Why should those with ordinary or restricted linguistic capabilities become interested in linguistic skills or in participating in the culture of critical discourse? Gouldner backed away from the question of the relation between intellectual speakers and publics, and focused attention only on the social formation of speakers of critical discourse. This generated the dilemma of theorizing the social totality in terms of collective subjectivity with its potential for authoritarian intellectualism (the vanguard party) versus a theory of critical discourse within the public sphere but without an audience. Disgusted with vanguardism, Gouldner chose the latter. Second, he was overly optimistic about the need of the culture of critical discourse and of the public sphere. The dominant trend is to produce an intelligentsia with scientific, technocratic or therapeutic knowledge interests of control and administration allied to corporate and state interests. The intelligentsia is not interested in normative reasoning, the condition for the politicization of discourse. And Gouldner's concept of the public sphere was limited to universities where critical teachers are themselves in no great demand.

From *Enter Plato* to *Marxism and the Sociology of Intellectuals* (to be published posthumously this year), Gouldner sought to develop a systematic sociological theory of the production of social theory itself. In his course syllabus of Fall 1971, entitled "Logos Armed" (which formed the basis for "The Politics of the Mind" in *For Sociology*), he wrote, "The way forward, I argue, is not by issuing theoretical manifestoes, methodological programs, nor merely by doing research, nor by teaching students social theory, but first and above all by creating and organizing new collectives of social theorists." To know the world for Gouldner was first and foremost a project of intellectuals' changing the conditions of theoretical production. Surely there were problems with this position that Gouldner was aware of — such as how the competing claims of different theoretical communities could be adjudicated. In answering his critics, however, Gouldner never failed to point out the problems of social domination inherent in the concealed instrumentalism of positivism and Marxism where they only served the power of the state. Given the bankruptcy of these positions, the onl,

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alternative was to establish theoretical communities committed to a public sphere not restricted by any structurally dominant interests. And this was what Gouldner set out to accomplish in 1974 with the establishment of *Theory and Society*. The journal was to provide a focus for the social organization of those who sought to develop new theoretical alternatives. Located in the limited public sphere of the university, the community was linked by mail and phone. As he wrote in the January 1978 issue, Gouldner was convinced that by that time the journal had accomplished its task by separating itself from older formulations, encouraging emergent paradigms and precipitating new syntheses. It was time now to get on with pressing matters of social substance: to put new theories to work on social issues.

Gouldner's final project was a study of Marx and Marxism — a project he began in the late 60s but one which he had probably envisioned since his youth. If Gouldner was once a functionalist with Merton, he was now a dialectician with Lukacs: and if *the Coming Crisis* was linear and analytic, then *The Two Marxisms* was topsy-turvy, multidimensional and epigrammatic. Some have claimed that *The Coming Crisis* is the better of the two. But the comparison may be unwarranted. They are different books reflecting changes in Gouldner himself. Yet *The Two Marxisms* reveals a side of Gouldner that had always been critical of objectivism from the days of *Wildcat Strike*. Against structuralist Marxism's claims for social objectivity, Gouldner posed hermeneutic interpretation grounded in human intention. Against Marxism's bourgeois obsession with economic development and infinite growth, Gouldner used Durkheim and the young Lukacs to argue that "The proper end of social reconstruction — of socialist emancipation — would seem to be human contentment and satisfaction, not indefinite industrial progress" (p. 217). Throughout the book, he appropriated Critical Marxism's concern for culture and morality as a weapon against the economism of scientific Marxism.

In the final chapter of *The Two Marxisms,* Gouldner undertook a penetrating demystification of Marxism's two "nightmares." Since the first one — its revolutionary messianism — had already been discussed in relation to the New Class, Gouldner focused his critique on the second, which values so highly the material and technological development wrought by capitalism. What Marxism challenged were the limits the propertied class placed on this process, but not the process itself, which could be further rationalized by state intervention. Marx's account of Western history, with the proletariat as the new cannon fodder, is only the external side of Marx's unbounded bourgeois materialism. Since this has only led to the domination of people by the state, Marxism contradicts its publically stated ideals. And in these terms — freedom from domination — Gouldner judged Marxism irrational.

As in his analysis of sociology in *The Coming Crisis,* Gouldner's study of Marxism reveals how social knowledge had become intricately involved in justifying state domination. The Enlightenment had failed in its sociological and Marxist variants. Yet the Enlightenment spirit (still alive in wildcat strikes, Critical Marxism, some sociology, etc.) could be resuscitated through the New Class project. By the late 1970s, then, Gouldner had charted a course through the development of Western social theory, laid to rest the hegemonic pretensions of the major currents, and created the infrastructure for the development of new social theories. Around this time, Gouldner began to travel more, especially to his two favorite cities — Amsterdam and San Francisco. Rumors occasionally surfaced about how Gouldner had slaughtered some poor soul at a recent

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lecture. But Gouldner was extremely impatient with stupidity, sophistry and any variant of sectarianism, and often his rage was well deserved.

In the spring of 1980 Gouldner entered into negotiations with the University of California at San Diego for a professorship in the sociology department. He was excited about the prospect of a move: of re-establishing old friendships, finding talented graduate students (they had all but vanished from Washington University as the department had turned into a center for technocratic sociology) and spending some time on the beaches of Southern California. It was not to be. Despite approval from the majority of the department, three in the minority were opposed and went to the university administration claiming that Gouldner was too abrasive and that *The Two Marxisms* was not as good as his earlier works.

Gouldner was a complex intellectual with a broad range of topics. Two problems, however, structured his life's work: consensual moral order and human emancipation. The consensual moral order expressed classical sociology's concern with preserving community in a social order that privatized human existence. Gouldner's critique of sociology was that it had relinquished this traditional focus in favor of a scientism compatible with the liberal state's manipulative logic. *The Coming Crisis* can thus be seen as a restatement of *The Dialectic of the Enlightenment*. Yet, the process of rationalization can never be absolute since cooperation, communication and authority guarantee a reciprocity which, however weakened, still makes possible a consensual morality. One of the intellectuals' roles is to realize a consensual moral order against technocratic domination.

The contradictory otherness of consensual moral order is human emancipation expressed in Marxism's concern with freedom from exploitation. From his youthful flirtation with Trotksyism to *The Two Marxisms,* Gouldner was committed to human emancipation as freedom from social constraint. While he always appreciated the importance of work, he never reduced emancipation to a "labor metaphysic." Marxism, like sociology, reflected the logic of domination and had lost its intentionality in favor of an instrumentalized reason as statist domination. As with consensual morality, Gouldner inverted the project of emancipation by turning it into a project of intellectuals. Thus, the project of emancipation was defined as the reorganization of the conditions productive of knowledge, not the organization of others.

Throughout his career, Gouldner struggled with sociology and Marxism in order to recover their emancipatory dimensions while others were repressing these dimensions for the sake of power, prestige and money. The tension between him and the academic establishment reflected the degree to which sociology and Marxism had relinquished their commitment to reason and freedom. Gouldner's was the voice of the early Enlightenment, angry at those who had lost its spirit. Now, the critical thinkers of Gouldner's generation are passing away. How well the spirit of critique, reason, consensual morality and freedom fares in the future will depend in part on those who remain to carry on this tradition.

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RECYCLING AMERICAN IDEOLOGY: THE SECOND COMING OF MICHAEL VRONSKY

by Flo Liebowitz

Much of the debate concerning Michael Cimino's film, *The Deer Hunter*, suggests that the main issue is simply its misrepresentation of the politics of the American adventure in Vietnam *per se*. Cimino himself, however, dismissed that view, saying that "the war is simply a means of testing courage and willpower. But it could just as easily have been the Civil War or any war."[1] Auster and Quart have claimed that the point of the film is to show that, despite recent defeats, the American character and will are still alive and well. Yet, they do not recognize the function of the character of Michael and, as a result, erroneously dismiss the film overall as full of "operatic long shots and striking emotional moments that never add up to a coherent vision." But the vision is indeed coherent, and notoriously familiar.

The Deer Hunter is not so much a justification of the Vietnam war, but a promotion of a sensibility which encourages such military adventures. Through the apotheosis of Michael Vronsky, we are presented with a conception of the natural order of things which disperses the cynicism and disillusionment of the post-Vietnam era and replaces it by a reaffirmation of heritage, will, and faith. In *The Deer Hunter*, following a leader because of his personal magnetism is not the degeneration of political culture, but its peak. War is not a reflection of a failure of policy or of imperial designs, but a test of will and character, a source of revelation, and the ultimate proving ground for human potential. The experience of the veteran who finds himself unable to communicate with those he left behind does not testify to the dehumanization and destructiveness of war; on the contrary, it is evidence of having passed through or into a stage of awareness to which ordinary people are simply inadequate. Finally, ritual does not embody an immature stage in the rationalization of experience, but recognition of the primacy of the *non*rational.

On the surface, Michael Vronsky is one of the solitary anti-social male heroes who have become fixtures of modern American literature. Auster and Quart have described Michael as "a working class Nick Adams."[2] Male bonding in *The Deer Hunter* represents "one of the highest forms of spiritual love."[3] Its views of hunting and, in some respects, of the natural as spiritual are perverse renditions of the "Higher Laws" section of Thoreau's *Walden*. This does not mean that the secret of the film's success lies simply in the celebration of straightforwardly American images and ideals, for, as Kael and Biskind have noted, *The Deer Hunter* unmistakeably evokes motifs of an essentially German origin as well.[4] The film's mythology resembles that of the Nazi period in several respects (Biskind called Cimino "a home-grown Leni Riefenstahl"), though it is

1. Quoted in Al Auster and Leonard Quart, "Hollywood and Vietnam: The Triumph of the Will," *Cineaste* IX, n. 3 (Spring, 1979), p. 9.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
3. Donald Spoto, *Camerado: Hollywood and The American Man* (New York, 1978), p. 210. Peter Biskind, though, sees the male relationships in the film as imbued with distinct overtones of repressed homosexuality.
4. Peter Biskind, "Come Back to the Mill, Nick Honey," *Seven Days* III, N. 3 (March 30, 1979). Cf. also Pauline Kael, "The God-Bless-America Symphony," *New Yorker*, Dec. 18, 1978, p. 71.

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most reminiscent of Romantic, post-Napoleonic Prussian nationalism and twentieth century pre-fascist conservatism.

The most developed themes in *The Deer Hunter* are that the fundamental principle of social organization is a natural hierarchy, and that "being a real man" involves not *merely* exhibiting Hemingway's virtues of laconic "grace under pressure," but also recognizing and taking one's place on the social ladder. And how can one tell where in the hierarchy a given individual belongs? By sending him off to war to see how he performs.

Of course, the point of *The Deer Hunter* is not that "war builds men," but only that war provides an arena in which "real men" can emerge. Similarly, the natural hierarchy is not solely racial. In fact, it is articulated best on the home front, through the development of Michael Vronsky's relations with people in his small home town. In fact, *The Deer Hunter* presents a vision of an *Uebermensch* in the process of recognizing his superiority to others, and quietly accepting the responsibilities of his position. In so doing, the film misrepresents the politics of the Vietnam intervention, though it does so while expounding an entire worldview. Thus, for Cimino, the post-combat scenes constitute a kind of "second coming" of Michael Vronsky, detailing his evolution into a "real man."

The Deer Hunter is the story of Nicky, Steve, and Michael, steelworkers in a smokey factory town in western Pennsylvania. The film follows the course of their relationships with each other and with their friends, John, Axel and Stan, from ordinary horseplay and adventure-seeking to the apotheosis of Michael and the destruction of Steve and Nicky (Nicky dies by his own hand in a Saigon gambling den; Steve ends up a wheel-chair-bound paraplegic).

Early in the film Steve is about to marry Angela and shortly thereafter he, Michael, and Steve will be off to Vietnam. In a lengthy sequence, Cimino depicts the wedding ceremony as a celebration of ritual and community, following it by a hunting trip characterized by some dramatic and much-discussed iconography. The action then switches to Vietnam, where Nicky, Michael and Steve are prisoners of the Viet Cong. They are forced to play Russian roulette but, thanks to Michael, they manage to escape, although they become separated during the attempt. After returning home, Michael discovers the wheelchair-bound Steve in a VA hospital and, just before the fall of Saigon, returns to Vietnam to search for Nicky, only to see him die playing Russian roulette in a sleazy gambling racket. Nicky's funeral provides the occasion for a reunion of what is left of the old crowd. The film ends with a supper following the funeral, where, as if saying grace, the participants quietly sing a chorus of "God Bless America."

The film unfolds the fact of Michael's superiority in the following steps:

Playing chicken in the car. During a joyride, Michael daringly squeezes his car into the narrow space between a truck and an embankment, the delight of his companions quickly turning to fear. Escapades like this gradually appear as merely *playing* at manliness but they serve to begin to distinguish Michael from his companions.

Michael postures with Stash over the forgotten boots. During the post-nuptial hunting trip, Stash, a whining little twerp, has forgotten to bring his boots. He asks to borrow Michael's, whereupon the latter explodes. Here, Michael is depicted as needing to make a moral example of those who aren't as "together" as he is and who rely on him because of it. Thus, this episode does not merely manifest Michael's superiority, but his as yet immature recognition of it as well.

Michael stalks and shoots the deer. Later in the trip, Michael stalks a deer amidst craggy

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mountains often unnatural in appearance, as solemn Russian Orthodox liturgical music plays on. Michael himself exudes *control*, displaying steadiness of nerve, accomplishing the kill with one well-placed shot. The setting makes it clear that hunting is a profound spiritual exercise for Mike, while it is little better than a diversion for others.

Michael in Vietnam. In a highly charged scene Michael and Nicky are forced to play Russian roulette by their captors. Apparently, this is not meant to extract information, but purely for the perverse enjoyment of their tormentors. Michael, of course, rises to the occasion, stoically taking his turns with the pistol. Nicky, however, thoroughly terrified, cannot bring himself to pull the trigger, though Michael's desperate coaching finally enables him to do it. Michael then challenges his captors to fill three chambers (rather than two), gambling that Nicky will draw an empty chamber, that he will be able to push Nicky into firing once more, and that he will be fast enough to turn the pistol on their captors. The gamble pays off and the escape is underway.

The post-war hunt. Not realizing that one cannot go home again, Mike goes hunting with Stash and Axel after his return, his interlude with his girl-friend Linda apparently reminding him that there is a higher form of inner experience than relating to women. There is another "hunting-as-ethereal-communion" scene in which a lone Michael stalks a deer. This time, however, he lowers his gun on the verge of a kill, refusing to fire. It is not that hunting has "gone sour" or that he can't bring himself to shoot; he does not shoot because he does not feel the *need* anymore. Since he has already proven himself in the war, he has transcended the need for the hunt.

Michael's confrontation with Stash. Upon his return to the mountain cabin in which the friends are staying, Michael discovers Stash childishly playing with his little pistol and he becomes violently angry. He snatches the pistol from Stash and holds it, Russian-roulette style, to the latter's temple. While this can be seen as a reaction to a bad war memory, Cimino's point is not that war warps personalities. In playing with the pistol, Stash is not merely being childish as he was in forgetting his gear on the pre-war hunting trip. He is committing a sacrilege which exhibits how completely he fails to understand the meaning of manhood. The others' puzzlement at Michael's explosion indicates that they do not have this insight either.

Michael and Steve at the VA hospital. Upon his return from Vietnam, Michael finds his old friends and neighbors reluctant to tell him what has become of Steve. He eventually finds out and locates his friend, mentally and physically mutilated, in a VA hospital. This sequence informs the audience of the real difference between the two characters. It is not Steve's disability that makes him compare unfavorably with Michael but his *attitude* towards it. He protests too much that he wants to stay in the hospital. The audience knows he really does not; he just does not believe he can manage outside. Cimino deplores doubt, defeatism, and self-deception, and Steve engages in all three.

Vietnam: Michael and Nicky in the gambling den. Shaken by what Steve has become, and uncertain of his own ability to readjust to civilian life, Michael returns to Saigon to search for Nicky. Following a visually impressive journey through a dismal section of Saigon, Michael confronts his friend, now a dissipated junkie who plays Russian roulette "professionally" in what is left of the gambling dens. Michael begs him not to go through with it, but Nicky continues and his luck runs out. What is pitiful here is not simply that Nicky dies, but that he feels the need to go through with the game at all. The problem is that Nicky has concluded that, in order to prove himself, he has to show that he is capable of acting without Michael's urging or, better, in contradiction to it. Michael's attempt to take him out provides the perfect opportunity for Nicky to do this and thereby show that he is as much of a man as Michael. Nicky's failing, then, is that he

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refuses to realize that he needs a Michael: he fights his destined place in the natural hierarchy and the consequences are fatal.

The Russian roulette games have been seen as a metaphor for the U.S. involvement in Vietnam. In the context of the previously described stages, however, a different emphasis emerges. What matters is really the various characters' *response* to playing Russian roulette. Michael's responses, both as a prisoner of war and as Nicky's would-be rescuer in Saigon, indicate that he can take control — an essential property of those at the top of the hierarchy. Nicky's response, on the other hand, is that of one who cannot.

But there is more to *The Deer Hunter* than simply an all-American plea to brazen it out, like the Duke used to, when the chips are down. *The Deer Hunter* is an Americanization of central themes of the Nazi and pre-Nazi German right. Michael himself is the American counterpart of the "new man" — the member of a mythical "elite of heroic supermen" connecting the idea of discipline with "the desire for renewal, for revival, for invigoration."[5] Like Riefenstahl, Cimino uses mountains in Michael's mystical hunting scenes, often filmed in slow motion to emphasize their ethereality. Moreover, in the film, war provides a stimulus for spiritual growth and moral regeneration, a theme common to modern fascism, several *pre*-fascist twentieth century figures, and post-Napoleonic German nationalism.[6]

Michael's relation to Nicky and the others evokes the ideal of society as a pyramid where everyone has a natural place. *The Deer Hunter* longs for "an organic state, a people's community untroubled by class warfare," whose integrity would be guaranteed by a leader and by a mystic, elemental force.[7] Further, Michael's town is notable for the absence of political or legal dimension. Thus, in the wedding reception and preparations for it, the steel town is depicted as the *völkisch* community of the Romantic nationalists. During the ceremony, the camera endlessly pans the elaborate grandeur of the church and the pageantry of the ceremony to convey the presence of some primordial, binding cosmic power, though the spirituality depicted by Cimino is pantheistic in character. (Michael glares disdainfully at Stan as the latter crosses himself during the wedding ceremony, but treats the plays of light and cloud he calls "sundogs" with the utmost seriousness. Upon the friends' return from the pre-war hunting excursion, John begins quietly playing the piano, and one by one, the others stop carrying on and raptly listen. It is a sort of decompressing afterplay where the music puts the listeners in touch with something "beyond.")

In the face of growing evidence that the U.S. could not automatically do as it pleased abroad, American national mythology faced a deepening crisis. But myths about a

5. Alastair Hamilton, *The Appeal of Fascism: A Study of Intellectuals and Fascism, 1919-1945* (New York, 1971), p. xxii.

6. As Mussolini argued, "Life is duty and struggle and conquest...war alone brings up to highest tension all human energy and puts the stamp of nobility upon the peoples who have the courage to meet it." Cf. Benito Mussolini, "The Political and Social Doctrine of Fascism," *International Conciliation* [!!] n. 306, January, 1935, pp. 5-17; reprinted in Eugen Weber, *Varieties of Fascism* (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1964), p. 48. Cf. also Ernst Jünger, a pre-Nazi conservative for whom battle "...is the birth hour of a new type — the warrior, who overcomes the meaninglessness of yesterday by a rediscovery of cosmic values and is the resurrected man of the 20th century." Cited in Klemens von Klemperer, *Germany's New Conservatism: Its History and Dilemma in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, 1954), p. 183. Cf. also the 19th century Romantic nationalist, Adam Müller, who stated that perpetual peace "would be a misfortune that would bring human development to a standstill." Cited in Hans Kohn, *The Mind of Germany: The Education of a Nation* (New York, 1960), p. 66.

7. Hamilton, *op.cit.*, p. 120.

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nation's place in the world die hard. Hence, the new mythology is not likely to give up the dream of American dominance altogether, though an examination of the home front before charging to victory once again would not be out of place. Faced there with increasing doubts about such fundamental matters as the American character and national purpose, about the ability of the system to deliver the goods, and about the possibility of a leader deserving anything more than pro forma confidence, the usually pragmatic and down-to-earth myth of the American hero took a mystical turn. It is not surprising, then, that the Vietcong in *The Deer Hunter* come across less as a political or military threat than as a virtually mythological evil, depraved and irreducibly "other."

Despite the physical and emotional suffering it depicts, *The Deer Hunter* offers the easy way out. The myth of Michael Vronsky makes it possible to avoid a critical reevaluation, while encouraging the taciturn tough guys among us to imagine themselves the Michaels of real life. Through Michael and Axel, the film celebrates the inarticulate and non-intellectual as fundaments of American culture. Clairton, Pennsylvania represents the promise of community achieved through simple and natural acts of faith. It is a community in which quietly capable leaders will naturally emerge and in which everyone knows his or her place — a powerful myth in a society forced to undergo an identity crisis.

The closing rendition of "God Bless America" is so important, and so effective, because it represents the affirmation of faith in "the American way of life" *in the face of the temptation of doubt*. The myths of Michael Vronsky and of Clairton are myths for a society that desperately wants to believe that radical changes are not necessary. They are myths for a society that desperately wants to believe in its own basic goodness and that the uncertainties of the present are only temporary so that, when the dust finally settles, America will still be fundamentally decent, united and master of the world.

THE COMMODIFICATION OF VIETNAM?

by Barton Byg

Cimino's *The Deer Hunter* is a mass culture product that sells. It is a conventional, manipulative Hollywood movie that moves large U.S. audiences. In trying to identify the ideological function of this film, Leibowitz has compared *The Deer Hunter* to Nazi ideology or German Romantic nationalist aesthetics. This comparison, however, says little about the film itself. To invoke this German tradition is to do little more than to invoke the roots of the modern culture industry in general. The Nazis are only unique in that they succeeded early in blending propaganda, violence, pornography, religion and a consumer mentality in a mechanism of cultural manipulation. Mass culture in the U.S. needs no further reason to imitate the formula than the fact that it still works.

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The Deer Hunter, however, represents the general failure of the culture industry to trivialize the public's experience of the Vietnam war, to turn it into a product easily sold on the mass market. Because of this failure, it has resorted to a hero image that entirely evades this experience and flees into myth. Leibowitz incorrectly assumes that this mythical hero is related to the Nazi's "new man," that he is meant to represent regeneration and renewal of national purpose. Instead he reveals the absence of such renewal from the stock of mass culture commodities. Leibowitz finds the mythical, non-rational hero appalling, but if he were indeed what Liebowitz misremembers as the "usually pragmatic and down-to-earth myth of the American hero," he would be even more appalling in the context of Vietnam. Rather than pragmatism and rationality, which might give credibility to what Leibowitz calls the "dream of American dominance," the Vietnam "hero" is closer to myth, ritual self-destruction and madness. Here Leibowitz fails to note the consistency with the tradition of ambivalent American heroes as well as the Christian symbolism so pervasive in American literature and film.

In disregarding the conventional nature of Cimino's methods, Leibowitz draws unjustified conclusions as to their ideological function. The assertion that the film glorifies "following a leader because of his personal magnetism" as a *political* act, or that "the myth of Michael Vronsky makes it possible to avoid a critical reevaluation," betrays a gross misunderstanding of the relation of American mass culture to ideology. Leibowitz notices the ritualistic, mythological, non-rational values of *The Deer Hunter,* but assumes that they affirm American imperialist ideology. In reality, they represent the failure of mass culture to deal with the ideological vacuum that Vietnam still represents. Since the culture industry must resort to such clumsy evasions to exclude politics, ideology and what Leibowitz hails as the "rationalization of experience," the door stands open for alternative representations of recent history.

The ambivalent, Christ-like American hero has always been one who cannot be followed beyond a certain point. Leibowitz remembers how John Wayne would "brazen it out" in the movies, but not the fact that his heroes most often, in John Ford's versions especially, end in destruction and total exclusion from society. The conquering hero could never be the same as the civilizing hero, and the failure of Cimino's deer hunter is that he is neither.

The emotional perversion of this American myth in *The Deer Hunter* does indeed avoid a rational critique, but it also is powerless to replace such a critique or render it impossible. The conquering Christ-hero of the American western is not meant to be imitated but sacrificed; but since the conquering of Vietnam is madness, not civilization, other people are the ones to be sacrificed.

The last consistency with traditional heroic myths that Leibowitz ignores is the fact that *The Deer Hunter* is a highly tragic love story much more than it is a war movie. She refers to the anti-social nature of the hero, the "repressed homosexuality" and the sexism implicit in the film as if they were the trivial devices of soap opera rather than the mythical basis for Wagnerian tragic opera. Leibowitz mistakes the character of Linda for Michael's girl-friend, when at first her allegiance is to Nick, his rival and John-like disciple. In turning Michael into a Nazi, Leibowitz does not even mention that Michael and Nick both play Russian roulette to determine who will survive; both participate in the same ritual madness. In this context, the necessity of Michael's return to Vietnam to eliminate his rival and bathe in his blood in a frenzy of (erotic?) passion leaves the rationalistic triviality of Leibowitz' analysis far behind.

Far from selling an affirmative ideology to justify or condemn the Vietnam war,

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The Deer Hunter reveals that this memory is still an open wound. Leibowitz implies that an ideological condemnation of the Vietnam War would be preferable; indeed it would free those of us on the right side of the fence from guilt in the matter. But this seems to be the easy and politically narrow way out, and in the context of cultural commodities may even rationalize the experience so that it can be manipulated more effectively. On the other hand, an open wound that is painfully wrenched open anew by issues such as the draft and El Salvador seems an infinitely more productive means to politicization of experience. This political opportunity exists because the anesthetics of the culture industry have not yet taken effect in this instance.

The implications of Leibowitz' condemnation of *The Deer Hunter* for the broader spectrum of Vietnam films are disturbing. The flight of the culture industry into ritual and madness to represent the war, which has predominated in fiction films on Vietnam, may well be the best situation possible. Among fiction films, *The Green Berets* (1968) was the last best hope for a rational, pragmatic defense of the war in Vietnam. It now stands out as both an aberration and a failure. Since then, virtually all Vietnam fiction films have fled into ritual and madness. This is most clearly true of *The Deer Hunter, Apocalypse Now* (1979), and the desperate self-destruction in *Who'll Stop the Rain* (1978). The "returnee" films also reveal more madness and schizophrenia than heroism, for example *Heroes* (1977) and, on one level, *Taxi Driver* (1979). The paralysis of the culture industry represented here may give more freedom and visibility to critical films, especially documentaries. Films such as *Hearts and Minds* (1974), *The War at Home* (1980), and *Limbo* (1972) are still free to show Vietnam as an unsettled and unsettling issue.

Most disturbing is the possibility that it will be well-meaning liberals participating in the culture industry who will do the most on behalf of trivializing the Vietnam war as a mass culture commodity. The greatest enemy of history and human experience may well be the "docu-drama," and as yet the Vietnam war has not been marketed in this package. The story-book sentimentality of NBC-TV's *Kent State* (1981), however, does threaten to turn events with world-political relevance into domestic melodrama.

The peak of trivialization so far, however, has been reached by the liberal-flavored *Coming Home* (1978). This film is in many ways the best example of all of using ideology to numb critical thought. Although based on criticism of the war, audience participation in this film is predetermined on both the intellectual and emotional level. The human and political struggle to mobilize against the war is reduced to a choice of commodities: the wheel-chair-bound veteran against the war (Jon Voight) over the career Marine (Bruce Dern). Presenting the love triangle on the level of caricature rather than myth actually serves to trivialize and depoliticize experience. In order to reject the war, the woman in the middle (Jane Fonda) need only reject one man for another. As one critic put it, her change of consciousness is reduced to a change of hairstyle. The Voight character, too, hardly represents a critique of sexism. Although sexually sensitive, he subscribes to many of the same macho concepts of manliness, charismatic leadership and power symbolism that would move any all-American boy.

Even the Vietnam-era rock music gives the film the apolitical air of a golden-oldie show. The link between the music and the war is not examined, but instead the transitory nostalgic appeal of the songs implies that the war, too, is merely part of the local color of a distant decade.

The tendency of *Coming Home* to reduce human experience to a commodity choice is undermined only by the performance of Bruce Dern as the Marine officer. Instead of appearing as a caricature, Dern's character insists on remaining a human being,

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whose fate could indeed prompt viewers to ask questions rather than believe they are being given answers. He portrays a vulnerable human being rather than a straw man who must be shot down. The culture industry will, however, do its best to turn the Vietnam War itself into just such a straw man, easily understood and easily resisted. This is an affront to the very essence of political activity based on human experience and human history.

So far the culture industry has failed where Vietnam is concerned in that it has not been able to efficiently reduce the human beings affected by the war to marketable icons that elicit predictable, soothing reactions. Audiences of *The Deer Hunter* are indeed powerfully manipulated in the realm of feeling, but they may still be free to think.

ACID STOMACHS AND BREINES' BROMIDES

by Jean Bethke Elshtain

Breines' politically acid stomach, the inspiration, he states, for his "short and sour" attack[1] unfortunately did not confine itself to his digestive tract but appears to have entered directly into his brain and corroded his thought processes. Beyond the personal vituperation, what is most remarkable about Breines' broadside is its failure to address any of the questions raised, in rather different ways (though Breines lumps us together) by Lasch and myself. Breines' vendetta apparently has as its aim excising from debate thinkers such as Lasch, myself, or anyone else now rethinking the fondly held shibboleths and challenging the dogmas by which, in Hegel's words, "thought pacifies itself." Piccone is somewhat guilty by his association with the views which give Breines political gastrities, but he is finally "forgiven": he can be redeemed. Lasch and I, however, are sent packing to the furthest reaches of political hell. What else is one to do with "some wierd blend of Jerry Falwell and Stalin"? It is clear that Breines fails to see that his uncritically-accepted but tenaciously held views set up a tidy universe within which he must distort any important opposition as "repressive," "authoritarian," "reactionary," "strident...one sided...pontifical."

Not surprisingly, Breines misses the underlying foundation for my position in a background tied to traditional familial forms and a pietistic faith profoundly suspicious of state power, of all self-constituted elites, and of abstracted intellectualizing cut-off from any recognizably human roots and purposes. This bears little relation to Breines ostensible "unmasking" of my "base theoretical superstructure." (My what?) True, I do appropriate arguments and concepts from Hegel and Freud, but I also build on pre-capitalist Western political thought, moral philosophy, aesthetics, theories of child development and the human life cycle, and diverse accounts of democracy — including the participatory democracy of the 1962 Port Huron statement.

That some of the values I attempt to redeem by reclaiming their progressive and emancipatory "moments" are also ostensibly embraced by the right says absolutely nothing in itself. Hitler called himself a "socialist" as he was having real socialists

1. Cf. Paul Breines, "The Left's Right: Remarks on the Relative Autonomy of the Base," in *Telos*, n. 46 (Winter, 1980-81), pp. 88-92.

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beaten, tortured, and tossed into concentration camps. That Jerry Falwell bleats endlessly about "the family" and that I, apparently, am also "for" the family means nothing. I call for a rethinking that will enable us to appropriate the imperatives, ideals, and images of social relations not dominated by exchange and still to be found in the family. In order to evaluate Falwell's position and my own Breines would have to take seriously my understanding of the family and my argument for why its transformation rather than its destruction is required to forestall the possibility of a future world populated by an aggregate of social monads confronting the arrayed force of political economy.

Having dealt me the Moral Majority karate chop, Breines goes on to link my defense of familial forms with Stalin. Here he capitulates to mindlessnes and makes common cause with the great thinker, Gloria Steinem of *Ms. Magazine*. (Though Steinem picked Hitler for her evil monster who was "for" the family in order to slander anyone who dared utter a peep in its defense.) If Breines had bothered to read what I said he would have seen that my notion of the family has no more in common with Stalin's than it does with Falwell's. Stalin geared the entire overweening, repressive power of the Soviet state towards eviscerating the family as a semi-autonomous social form. He demanded a family thoroughly permeated and watched over by the minions of the state. That Stalin felt compelled to take measures to quash possible familial autonomy suggests that the family, as a sphere of social life with its own integrity and purposes, poses a problem for those seeking total control. This, of course, has been the case — from Plato down — but Breines, in all his blithering, ignores the fact that families historically have rarely simply "served" the state and that families can, and have, sometimes served instead as a base of resistance against the "powers that be."

Within my essay, the family is that sphere of ethical life which remains the locus of our most powerful and meaningful emotional ties. I argue explicitly against male domination and familial authoritarianism which I find at odds with the family's inner integrity. What is curious is that Breines somehow assimilates my argument, hardly a widely embraced one, to voices of reaction even as he portrays himself as the courageous defender of a position under horrible assault. Breines' implicit embrace of "life-styles" that involve human beings only in tentative, thin, and contingent relations with one another is the position that more neatly meshes with capitalism's drive towards rationalization and homogenization. It is much easier for social forces to ingest or flatten-out the person whose loyalties to specific others do not run deep than it is to absorb a set of social relations which involve powerful loyalties and not-easily-overridden ties. Studies of Vietnam draft resisters indicate how important their family upbringing and the support of families was for their refusal to fight in Vietnam.

To the extent that my defense of ordinary human social relations sets me at odds with the "gelatinous, incoherent, awkward, and finally self-destructive...New Left of the 1960s" (to borrow Breines' own words), I plead guilty. But what was most hopeful about the messages of the counter-culture and the New Left can be held on to, though they require, for their completion, a social world quite at odds with that envisaged by the counter-culture. We have learned the hard way that in order to "do politics," to persist in seeking change, a person must have some continuing, coherent social location as a base. Most communes self-destructed, turned in upon themselves and became authoritarian, reproduced old modes of domination or, most horribly, wiped out children in the name of not giving them "hang-ups." The "totally free" lifestyle turned into a denial of self-respect under the obsessive terms of a search for instant gratification that debased human relations to moments of consumption with their own built-in

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obsolescence. My answer to this degeneration is not, as Breines claims, either a militant turning back to familial authoritarianism or the embrace of some externally imposed "socialist discipline." Nothing in my essay supports, encourages, or requires either of these unacceptable alternatives.

The discipline which threw Breines' stomach into one of its most serious spasms, is a discipline of the self by the self, an inner condition which alone enables a human being to engage in purposive activity, to think reflectively, and to have rich social relations that persist over time rather than collapsing at the first irritant. In other words, I seek persons capable of commitment rather than the human being as an amorphous blob oozing indiscrimately over the social landscape, never "sticking" anywhere, never taking coherent shape as a creature of dignity who has a capacity to identify with the needs and suffering of others.

Breines is also discombobulated by what he mislabels my attack on feminism. As Breines is fully aware, I have defended a feminist alternative over the last seven years. Yet, my arguments for a feminist theory that makes contact with its potential constituency, the vast majority of women, by drawing upon and learning from received notions and traditional practices, even as it finally transforms these within a feminist framework, is blatantly ignored and distorted. Breines implies that to be a feminist means one must either embrace everything that comes with the "feminist label," no matter how mindless or pernicious, or keep silent. Feminism, like any mode of thought, attains greater comprehension of itself only through debate and challenge. My ostensible "denunciations of feminism" have always been specifically addressed to certain feminist texts and to modes of theorizing which I clearly identify. All this is ignored by Breines. Which feminism does he see himself defending?

Then there is Sartre. My discussion is far too attentuated to do justice to the complexity of the issues involved. But this hardly means it deserves to be smeared by being tied to those of various unnamed "hack Marxists." Let me begin by conceding, for the moment, Breines' insistence that when Sartre speaks of the skier as one who "appropriates and conquers" a visual field he is making a Hegelian argument based, presumably, upon Hegel's opening moves in the *Phenomenology*. Fine. Breines then claims that Sartre's concept of the self is tied to notions of "intersubjectivity and communication." But this is precisely where Sartre's arguments break-down. Sartre, unlike Hegel, gets stuck at a fixed point in the dialectic: his persons become mired in the "practico-inert," in a "series" of reciprocal isolation. This reciprocity of shared seriality can only be temporarily transcended by group eruptions for their "own sake" rather than framed within a shared vision of the social good or human freedom. In direct contradistinction to Hegel, Sartre grounds individual choices in freedom *as* nothingness. Contrast Hegel's subject, whose self-consciousness obtains only in another self-consciousness. Hegel holds out at the culmination of the dialectic a mutuality of recognition that can only be the work of a "we." Sartre's subject revolves on the level of the consciousness of the "master" in Hegel's master-slave dialectic, for the master *is* the consciousness which exists for itself. When self-consciousness has attained what Hegel calls the "happy state of being ethical substance," it culminates in free unity with others. Sartre's remains a Hobbesian universe in which the motive force is terror and fear of violence and death.

For Sartre, as for Hobbes, terror alone drives individuals to form groups and this same terror, as Hobbes also argues, keeps them in groups. Sartre says: "Terror. . . binds my neighbor to me by the threat of violence it will use against him if he dares to be 'unbrotherly.'" Hobbes put it this way: "The passions that incline men to peace, are fear of death. . . ." Where Hegel winds up with determinate spheres of ethical life

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including the family, each having its own powerful reason-to-be yet subsumed inside the wider ordering of his grand teleology, Sartre cannot get beyond "mortal solitude" and seriality where the only "way out" is a robust, unreflective voluntarism. Sartre's notion that we somehow create ourselves out of nothing would be anathema to Hegel who traces the constitution of the self in and through overlapping social forms in history.

Finally, let me just note what Breines ignores, for that provides important clues to his thinking((1) He ignores Lasch's argument that the new narcissism represents a radical and alarming development that those committed to democracy and social justice must think through; (2) He ignores the question of politics vs. what I call "pseudo-politics," an activity that exists in order to "fulfill the self" and sometimes passes for politics when, in fact, it is a displacement of politics; (3) He ignores my argument that democratic social forms depend on the creation of human subjects with a capacity for public action and debate, with a conscience which prompts them to make judgments about moral issues and competing political alternatives, and that this creation must rest on a familial foundation of some sort; (4) He ignores my criticism of familial authoritarianism and my defense of a theory of authority that does not reproduce domination; (5) He ignores my case for tapping the liberatory "moment" imbedded within traditional notions of femininity; (6) He ignores my discussion of fantasy as a mediation of inner-outer and a wedge into a potentially transformative political imagination.

I am not sure what Breines can take to minister to his political acidity. His condition may be permanent. Certainly he has all the symptoms of someone caught in a self-repeating, self-fulfilling malaise in which dogma parades as anti-dogma, theoretical vacuity is garbed as theoretical openness, and progressive tolerance too easily becomes the regressive embrace of every group manifestation that labels itself "anti-establishment" or anti-bourgeois even as it plays out a politics of self-interestedness and a devotion to the "how to get yours" and "gimme mine" ethos of American consumer capitalism. It appears likely that Breines will continue to treat his digestive miseries with large, self-administered doses of a bromide not unlike the one he created, then swallowed, in his attack on Lasch and me. Breines cries that he wants "relief" and he has found it in what might be called the Alka-Seltzer approach to discourse: plop-plop, fizz-fizz, Oh what a relief it is! I refuse to prescribe bromides to Paul Breines; indeed I have none to offer. But then, he has an endless supply of his own. Thought which "pacifies itself" has always shown a tenacious capacity to reproduce itself. . . indefinitely.

RE-STALINIZATION IN YUGOSLAVIA?

Events in Yugoslavia show once again how a leadership's prior commitment to Leninist tactics can sabotage all claims to popular sovereignty. In principle, the recent attacks on political critics are not consonant with either socialist democracy or workers' self-management. In practice, they negate the sense of credibility, the spirit of compromise, that the post-Tito leadership clearly wants to convey. Indeed, lashing out against a heterogeneous, home-grown assortment of "enemies," and tarring them with the brush of "liberalism" and "national chauvinism," seems vain or even derisory. This is, in short, a witch-hunt. As such, it must be opposed.

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Who have been the targets? Again, the Belgrade University philosophers who were associated from the mid-sixties to early seventies with the journal *Praxis*, and whose recent attempt to seek authorization for a new journal, *Javnost* [*The Public*] was turned down; a respected historian from Zagreb named Franjo Tudjman; the Roman Catholic church hierarchy in Croatia, the area of the country where most people of that religion live. As an individual, Tudjman, at least, is a new victim of official attack. But in general, these three cases embody the Yugoslav leaders' recurrent fear that the country will fall apart, that the League of Communists will wither away, if people dare to call real problems by their real names. To point out social and regional inequities, outside the officially-sanctioned bugaboos of bureaucratism, technocracy, and the south Serbian territory of Kosovo, is to say that the Emperor has no clothes.

The case of the Belgrade Seven dates from 1975, when the highest political authorities in Serbia mounted a serious pursuit: to silence these intellectuals, or to remove them from all public forums for political discussion, including their teaching jobs [1] But the illogic of hindsight permits the official inquisitors to push their charges farther back in time. Thus the Belgrade professors have long been held responsible for fomenting the student movement of 1968 and, according to a recent story in the Yugoslav press, they have been accused of dissenting *as far back as 1956* from, first, Marx and Engels and, then, Marx and Lenin.[2] Historic dates, 1968 and 1956! But what is the point of their "dissent" supposed to have been? That "they could show that Stalinism was Leninism brought to a logical conclusion," the article says, and so, because of the Yugoslav leadership's continued identification with Leninism, to imply that Stalinism still menaced the Yugoslavs' democratic goals. The doubt that they frequently voiced in *Praxis* essays, that the market mechanisms on which the Yugoslav economy has increasingly relied could stimulate both labor productivity and socialist solidarity — two additional, official goals — also evoked the authorities' anger. The critical philosophical stance, itself the "critique of everything under the sun" that the Belgrade group claimed as their fundamental right and duty, inspired the politicians' distrust. Finally, the attempt to take this criticism outside the inner circles of party, politics, and *partia* — by publishing in journals at home and abroad — called forth an intensified effort at repression. On December 8, 1980, after a five-hour meeting of the "enlarged" (enlarged by whom? packed with individuals brought in from where?) University Party group, the seven intellectuals were removed from their posts and separated from their source of income. Purely through police action, the passport of Mihailo Markovic, former Partisan officer and most peripatetic member of the Belgrade group, was removed from Markovic's possession. Undoubtedly because of strong support for the Belgrade philosophers in the international academic community, among various professional societies and journals, they have not — so far — been legally prosecuted.

In contrast to the Belgrade professors, Franjo Tudjman has been subject to prosecution. From February 17 to 20, 1981, the Zagreb District Court heard arguments by the public prosecutor that over the past three or four years, in interviews published or aired in foreign countries, Tudjman had irrevocably and "with malicious intent

1. See "Introduction to the Belgrade Manifesto" and "The Meaning of the Struggle for Civil and Human Rights," in *Telos*, n. 35 (Spring, 1978), pp. 184-191; "The Case of the Belgrade Eight," *Telos*, n. 19 (Spring, 1974), pp. 138-141; and the official Yugoslav statement "On the Ideological and Moral Fitness of Professors and Teaching Staff at Belgrade University," *Telos*, n. 18 (Winter, 1973-74), pp. 156-158.

2. Teodor Andjelic, "Univerzitet Osuda opozicionog ponasanja," *NIN*, February 9, 1981, pp. 15-16. While this article contains numerous critical comments and offensive remarks about the Belgrade professors, they are not represented by either their statements or their photographs. (The pages are embellished with the photos of several of their critics.)

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misrepresented [Yugoslavia's] socio-political state of affairs." In particular, Tudjman allegedly used his reputation as a Yugoslav patriot — he is, indeed, a retired Partisan general who was decorated during World War II — to advance the interests of Croatia over those of the federation as a whole. According to a press report of the trial, Tudjman considered the charges "unfounded and absurd."[3] The remarks that were exerpted from the interviews suggest that Tudjman feels that the Yugoslav federation is critically flawed by the absence of legitimization of open discussion about which areas, and which ethnic groups, reap the benefits of state policy. That this expression of discontent should be considered tantamount to treason can only indicate that Tudjman has been pilloried. In any event, he has earned a prison sentence from the District Court.

Even among these already strange bedfellows, the Roman Catholic prelates of Croatia would seem to be the odd man out. Harassed by the government since its founding in 1946, the Church leaders reached a *modus vivendi* with the political leadership by virtue of a 1966 concordat signed by the state and the Vatican. However, the major, symbolic bone of contention between Catholics and the state remains the official status of the late Cardinal Stepinac, who died during a term of internal exile in his native village in 1960. For at least the past two years, the Croatian Church leaders have publicly demanded that Stepinac's reputation be rehabilitated. This year, at a February 5 press conference, the high-ranking League of Communists official who had been responsible for prosecuting the Cardinal years ago attacked with "a veritable requisitory," as the French press reports, "against the Catholic hierarchy, for its attempts to build itself into a "political force" with regard to creating a party opposed to the existing social order in Yugoslavia, which is "intolerable for a number of reasons.'" In particular, "the highest dignitaries of the Catholic Church in Croatia. . . act so as to make the Church a refuge for renegades, opponents, and political desperados."[4] So far, there has been neither prosecution nor persecution of Church officials, but the timing of this attack, in conjunction with the cases of the Belgrade Seven and Franjo Tudjman, suggests an intensification of the climate of fear. In the Yugoslav context, this bodes a regressive step backward to Stalinism.

Why is the political leadership willing to take this risk? What is really at stake?

In their view, the structure of political control that they have created — and that in turn has created them — is in jeopardy. If the proclaimed goals of self-management and direct democracy were really taken seriously, then the monopoly over political initiative that the League of Communists has would be broken. There are already several constraints on this monopoly that are built into the system. On the one hand, the professional criteria of decision making that have been encouraged by Yugoslav "pragmatism" weaken the party's adherence to democratic centralism. On the other hand, the autonomy that has been instilled through years of experience in self-management institutions contradicts the continued ascription to the party of a role embodying the "general interest." Obviously, the Yugoslav leadership looks East, toward Gdansk and Radom, and reads the handwriting on the wall. Either move forward, as the Yugoslavs themselves say, toward more direct democracy, or move backward, as we fear, toward Stalinism.

The Yugoslav government must be reminded that the struggle for democracy is recorded in acts and rights, not slogans. This attempt to tighten their control through bullying, innuendo, blacklisting, and political justice must stop before it takes more victims. Repression in the long run will cost them much more than dialogue. Those of us who still find a positive meaning in "the Yugoslav experience" constitute an impres-

3. Jug Grizelj, "Tudjmanov 'novi val,'" *NIN*, February 22, 1981, pp. 23-24.
4. *Le Monde*, March 7, 1981.

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sive international tribunal. We cannot be distracted by fine words and vague formulas. In our minds, socialist democracy means that the Belgrade philosophers should be reinstated in their teaching positions, that the sentence against Franjo Tudjman should be rescinded, and that the Catholic Church hierarchy should be left alone. There must be no more dress rehersals for Stalinism in Yugoslavia.[5]

5. Robert S. Cohen, a long-time friend and associate of the Belgrade philosophers, who publishes a mimeographed newsletter on their situation (c/o Department of Physics, Boston University, Boston, Mass. 02215), has reprinted in his *Yugoslav Notes* of January 13, 1981, a sample of statements and resolutions condemning the final firing of the Belgrade group that have been adopted by various academic departments and professional societies, and circulated by mail or through the daily press (such as in the letters to the editor column of the *New York Times*). He has suggested that such letters also be sent to the presidencies of the Socialist Republic of Serbia and the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, both in Belgrade, and to the Yugoslav Embassy in the capitals of all foreign countries. In addition, steps that might help to protect the lives and the livelihood of the Belgrade group include invitations for them to lecture or teach in any philosophy or sociology department, where they may work in French, German, Russian, or English, and to publish abroad. Finally, committees of solidarity are being formed in the United States and Europe. The people to contact for information are Professor Charles Kahn, Department of Philosophy, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa. 19104; Professor G.H. von Wright, Academy of Finland, Helsinki; and Professor Joachim Israel, Department of Sociology, University of Lund.

[Note added April 22:] By early April, a new Institute for Social Research was established with an affiliation with Belgrade University. At last report, negotiations were under way with the seven Belgrade philosophers for research appointments in the new institute. Meanwhile, the new journal *Praxis International*, edited by Markovic and Bernstein of Haverford College, has just appeared with a large editorial board including Stojanovic, Tadic, Gabulovic and Supek, from the old Yugoslav *Praxis*. On the other hand, several violent public attacks on Gajo Petrovic of Zagreb University were published in March in the Zagreb press with no reply permitted. Furthermore, Markovic has not yet had his passport restored.

PRAXIS INTERNATIONAL

πραξις

Praxis International is a new journal committed to democratic socialism in the spirit of the Yugoslav journal *Praxis*. Its purpose is to encourage the development of critical analyses, explore rational alternatives, and examine possibilities for democratic social transformation. The primary language will be English; occasionally, however, articles will appear in French and German. There will be abstracts in English, French, and German.

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Reviews:

Jack Zipes, *Breaking the Magic Spell: Radical Theories of Folk and Fairy Tales.* Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979. 201 pages. $13.95.

If a critique of everyday life is to become a serious undertaking, virtually everything we experience needs to be subjected to careful and critical scrutiny. Even fairy tales. Like so much else in modern culture, these tales may not be as innocuous as they appear. To the extent that the culture industry has appropriated them and uses their motifs to manipulate consciousness or shape behavior, especially in children, fairy tales may be more effective as instruments of social control than one would think. Perhaps for this reason the study of these tales is too important to be left to folklore aficionados or specialists in children's literature.

Two groups have recently noticed the larger social or psychological importance of fairy tales, and have tried to approach them in original ways. The first are the psychotherapists, whose work has lately gained some attention, and the second are the Marxists, whose work remains practically unknown in this country.

The psychotherapists have turned to fairy tale material to see what it might reveal about certain psychic states, the meaning of dream symbolism, recurrent Oedipal and incest motifs, or stages in sexual development. In the Freudian tradition, one can find most of these themes as far back as the early work of Karl Abraham (1909), Otto Rank (1912), and Freud himself (1913).[1] Bruno Bettelheim's much publicized *The Uses of Enchantment* (1974) must also be placed in this tradition. However, there is another, a Jungian, line of interpretation that has contributed even more extensively to fairy tale research. Not surprisingly, this line discovers not primarily Oedipal or sexual themes, but collective archetypes, shadow figures, Great Mothers, anima and animus symbols, and the like. Besides Jung's own essay on the subject of fairy tales (1954), there are more exhaustive studies in this vein by two of his disciples, Marie-Louise von Franz and Hedwig von Beit.[2]

The others who have recently taken a closer look at folk and fairy tales are the Marxist (or Marxist-informed) scholars, particularly those in Germany. One can find the tentative beginnings of a radical approach to the tales in parts of Ernst Bloch's *Erbschaft dieser Zeit* (1935) and *Das Prinzip Hoffnung* (1938-1947), but these starting points have been developed in a more complete way in the contemporary work of August Nitschke, Dieter Richter, Johannes Merkel, and others.[3]

Zipes' new book comes directly out of this second tradition. His main concern is elucidating the social rather than the psychological meanings and values contained in folk or fairy tales. If there is any "liberation" to be achieved by creatively working through the tales, Zipes wants it to be not simply personal or mental, but social and cultural liberation as well. By looking at matters from this perspective, he significantly changes the questions usually asked of fairy tales. He also helps alter the focus of

1. See Sigmund Freud, "Märchenstoffe in Gräumen," *Internationale Zeitschrift für ärztliche Psychoanalyse,* I (1913), pp. 147-151. The early psychoanalytical investigations by Abraham and Rank, as well as more recent ones influenced by depth psychology, can be found in *Märchenforschung und Tiefenpsychologie,* ed. Wilhelm Laiblin (Darmstadt, 1969).

2. Carl Gustav Jung, "The Phenomenology of Spirit in Fairy Tales," *Psyche and Symbol,* ed. Violet S. de Laszlo (New York, 1958), pp. 61-112. See also Marie-Louise von Franz, *Shadow and Evil in Fairytales* (Zurich, 1974), and *The Feminine in Fairytales* (Zurich, 1972); and Hedwig von Beit, *Symbolik des Märchens,* 3 volumes (Bern, 1952-1957).

3. See Ernst Bloch, *Erbschaft dieser Zeit* (Frankfurt, 1962), pp. 168-86, and *Das Prinzip Hoffnung,* I (Frankfurt, 1969), pp. 409ff; August Nitschke, *Soziale Ordnungen im Spiegel der Märchen,* 2 volumes (Stuttgart, 1976); and Dieter Richter and Johannes Merkel, *Märchen, Phantasie, und Sociales Lernen* (Berlin, 1974). Zipes discusses the work of these and other German scholars in his book.

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research that has shaped folktale study from the time of the Grimm brothers until the relatively recent work of Vladimir Propp, Stith Thompson, and Marianne Thalmann, among others.[4] This "opening up of the discussion" may be the greatest value of Zipes' book. In six chapters he manages to deal with a surprisingly wide variety of topics, from the history of folk and fairy tales, to their ideology and politics, to their contemporary instrumentalization, to extended comments on Tolkien, Bettelheim, and such film fantasies as *Star Wars* and *Wizzards*. Moreover, Zipes is thoroughly familar with Critical Theory, and is able to use the works of Adorno, Marcuse, Habermas, and Negt and Kluge to good advantage — often with much imaginative insight. Throughout, Zipes succeeds in fusing empirical detail with theoretical sharpness, though on a few occasions theory is asked to carry a point when not enough evidence is provided.

Zipes' main thesis is that folk and fairy tales contain radical perceptions, hopes, and visions which, if noticed, would be stimulants to social change. Today, however, these possibilities, though still latent, seem to Zipes to have become obscured or systematically distorted by a culture industry that has trivialized them for reasons of profit or ideological control. A "magic spell" has been cast over the original, radical magic of the tales thanks to the commodification and instrumentalization of fantasy promoted by modern capitalism. The result has been a widespread inability of people to see the emancipatory potential embedded in folk and fairy tales. Hence "breaking the magic spell" would mean loosening the grip of false consciousness so that the radical messages of the tales can be seen again, and, it is to be hoped, acted upon.

In the process of arguing this thesis, Zipes raises (partly inadvertently) some important issues concerning the proper *methods* for cultural criticism. Here the value of the book shoots beyond its treatment of particular folk motifs. In fact, Zipes touches on some fundamental questions of approach that must be pursued if one is going to engage in an effective critique of everyday life. Before dealing with Zipes' interpretation of folk and fairy tales, I first want to turn to the larger cultural-methodological ramifications of his approach (with which I agree and disagree). Fortunately, Zipes' book is intentionally written to "stimulate further thought" rather than to make dogmatic statements about his material. Often he takes bold risks in his arguments, thereby opening up spaces — a kind of imaginative "public sphere" — in which others can step in and disagree. I want to take advantage of these spaces to initiate an amicable discourse with Zipes over some of the methodological points he raises. These points *are* important, and if taken to heart they could have some bearing on how cultural criticism is, or should be, written — and also on what *solutions* such criticism can reasonable offer to remedy contemporary problems.

Folk and fairy tales obviously exist as a given throughout our culture. There is nothing more common, more taken for granted, than the general awareness of these stories, learned for the most part between the ages of two and ten. Most of the familiar tales are the same ones known in virtually identical detail by our parents and grandparents, and by still earlier generations before them. This would seem to make such tales an integral part of an apparently static popular culture.

But the important thing about any tale is not what it is, or even what it says, but what it *means*. Its power to affect people lies entirely in its meaning. Its meaning,

4. Earlier folktale research has generally focused on topics such as: (1) the origin and dissemination of the tales (Grimms, Müller, Benfey, Wesselski, Köhler); (2) their form or structure, and the comparative morphology of the tales (the Finnish School, Propp, Thompson); and their literary, aesthetic, or philological qualities (Benz, Thalmann, Lüthi). Zipes bypasses most of these issues which have dominated folktale study for 150 years.

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however, depends upon how it is received and interpreted by an experiencing subject. One could say that the *information* in a fairy tale, for example, is directly imprinted in the words of the tale; the "facts" of the story line are objectively verifiable, and do not depend on the impressions of a listener or reader. But information is not the same as meaning, and facts are not the same as interpretations. The truth is that meaning as such does not inhere in things but emerges out of them — or rather is drawn out by active, interpreting subjects. This is worth recalling in order to avoid an overemphasis on the supposed "meaning" of folk or fairy tales. In the past, cultural criticism has too often rested its case after attacking the objective reality of modern commodity culture. But no critique can really be finished until it has also dealt with the internalization of the reified world of culture (and unfortunately — or fortunately! — there is no simple one-to-one correlation between what something is and how it is perceived, internalized, or acted upon by various individuals).

Put differently, the actual meaning of folk or fairy tales cannot be grasped until the social, experiential context in which that meaning is communicated and received is understood. In the long oral history of folktales this context includes, first, the overall culture of the community in which the tale is told; second, the values and intentions of the teller of the tale, and how he or she interprets it in telling it; and third, the assumptions and values of the hearer of the tale, and how he or she interprets the tale in light of these assumptions and values.[5] Because these three elements, and the interaction between them, have changed so much over time, it was historically unavoidable that the meaning of the tales had to change as well. Moreover, since the oral tradition has practically disappeared in the West today, the classic folktales are now more often read or viewed than heard, and this too has drastically altered the nature of the context. To return, then, to an earlier point: although folk or fairy tales are present everywhere in our culture, and although in many cases these are exactly the same tales known by our ancestors, they no longer carry the same power or symbolic force because the context in which they are conveyed or received — and now also packaged and distributed by the media — has been fundamentally transformed. We have the same stories but different meanings. We have the same themes, even the same words, but the aura in which they are enveloped has changed entirely. As Nietzsche put it, speaking of another matter: "It is not enough that one uses the same words; one also has to use the same words for the same species of inner experiences."[6] Today it is precisely the "species of inner experiences" that are different, not only between our age and previous ones, but between some classes and others *within* contemporary society (and also between men and women, and boys and girls, within each class).[7]

5. See Linda Dégh, *Folktales and Society: Story-Telling in an Hungarian Peasant Community*, trans. Emily M. Schossberger (Bloomington, 1969).

6. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York, 1966), p. 216.

7. The significance of the "forest," whose presence dominates many folk tales, may be a case in point. Today the word would no doubt evoke different images from boys as compared to girls, and from a rural as opposed to an urban population. But all of these images together would still be profoundly different from what the forest meant a millennium ago. We have no present imagining of what foreboding and terror it must have stirred in young listeners in the oral tradition because it does not arouse the same responses anymore. (How could it when few today have experienced virgin forests? If we have been in the "woods," as opposed to the forest, it is likely to have been a national or state park interlaced with roads, tourist markings and guideposts, and concession stands.) In the original collection of Grimms' fairy tales, about one-quarter of the stories take place in or near the forest. It is a place where almost no one goes to play or meet someone. It is always portrayed as dark, vast, primeval, and mysterious — the home of witches, wolves, dwarves, and evil spirits (though occasionally also woodcutters and a few friendly animals). And by contrast, the tales always convey

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Having said all this, the problem becomes still more complicated. Many of the best-known folk and fairy tales are not the original ones created centuries ago, but are the products of a continuous reworking of certain ancient themes over scores of generations. Only relatively recently, in the last two or three centuries, have the tales assumed the form in which most of us know them. This reworking occurred not simply because of changes introduced by imaginative storytellers, or because of a misappropriation of the tales as they moved from one region to another. It also occurred because there were intentional reinterpretations of the stories due to the influence of specific class interests and values, a point Zipes makes very strongly and convincingly. Various classes at different times in history used the tales for their own purposes. They loaded them with ideological or political messages. They gave them a cultural function – for example, to teach acquiescence or submission to "natural superiors" – which they hoped would be picked up along with the tales' simple ability to please or enchant. Folk and fairy tales, in other words, have been made to serve the interests of social domination. This notion could probably be borne out by investigating each of the classic tales archeologically, that is, by studying the many layers of interpretation the stories have received as they passed from one age to another, and were refashioned by one social group or another.

Of course, the latest utilization is usually the one with the widest currency. Although, historically speaking, it may be only one of a dozen available interpretations, it is often treated as the definitive one simply because it has the most massive circulation. Today this would be the Disney version of folk and fairy tales. Disney's film re-creations, which have seriously distorted the earlier interpretations the tales acquired, become so powerful and authoritative because they have been so thoroughly commercialized and disseminated throughout the world.[8] Millions, for instance, know the story of Cinderella or Snow White *only* through Disney's films, even though the written sources, from which these films notably diverge, are easily obtainable.[9] Ironically, Disney's films, with their subtly coded messages reinforcing the dominant value system, have become the standard by which previous interpretations of the tales are now judged and found wanting. So firmly have the film versions been stamped in the popular mind as the only correct ones, that anything else has begun to seem inauthentic and unacceptable. Commentators have even reported children being intolerant of earlier, more authentic renditions of the tales because they conflict with Disney's film portrayals. A better example of cultural reification would be hard to find.

How have we arrived at such a point, where one interpretation seems to be replacing all earlier ones (though these still remain as residues or survivals)? This question can be answered only by looking at the history of folk and fairy tales, and by taking note of the successive transformations of their motifs through several strata of interpretations, from the oral, to the written, to the latest media versions. I want to sketch such a brief history (with information taken, in part, from Zipes' book) because there is no other

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the "joy of the clearings," and the sense of relief that open spaces signal as compared to the "oppressive darkness" of the forest. Se Victor Brun, "The German Fairy Tale," *Menorah Journal*, XXVII (1939), pp. 147-55.

8. In 1966 alone Walt Disney Productions estimated that 100 million people watched a Disney TV show *every week*, 240 million saw a Disney movie during the year, and 800 million read a Disney book or magazine. See Richard Schickel, *The Disney Version* (New York, 1968), p. 19.

9. Zipes makes some interesting comparisons between the written texts of these tales, by Perrault and the Grimm brothers respectively, and Disney's reinterpretations (pp. 110-15). His comments seem to confirm Adorno's observation that the mass-oriented film often reworks "the fairy tale in the interest of the culture industry" and "brings to light...what always serves injustice." T.W. Adorno, *Minima Moralia*, trans. E.F.N. Jephcott (London, 1974), pp. 204-06.

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way to put the present in perspective, or to explain where we might go from here. A short history of the metamorphosis of the tales will also allow me to be clearer about where and why I have some disagreements with Zipes, especially concerning how the tales might be made effective in altering modern consciousness in a positive way. It should be said, however, that this sketch is still a history of only *one* of the three factors mentioned above that determine the ultimate social-personal meaning of the tale for the individual. It is an account of only *how the tale is told*, and of the values infused into it by the individuals who narrate, write, or film folk and fairy tales, and then distribute them to a mass audience. But so long as any historical description of this sort leaves out the other two factors, it can never claim to be the whole story. A complete and accurate history of the tales would have to include: (1) a history of the cultural milieu as a whole, including the predominant system of values within which the tales are deciphered, assessed, and given an "official" social or moral meaning; and (2) a history of the individual consumption or reception of the tales, which would be a history of *personal* perceptions, interpretations, and utilizations entirely apart from the official meanings conferred on the tales. No matter how powerful the telling or packaging of a tale is, there is no guarantee that what is internalized by the individual receiver is the same thing intended by the author. What I want to summarize here is the one-sided history of the production and transmission of folk and fairy tales, but it must be kept in mind that the other two elements are constantly present.

It may be helpful, then, to see the evolution of folk and fairy tales in terms of seven stages of continuous restructuring and reformulation over time.

Stage 1. The end of the Ice Age to the 17th century. During these centuries only folktales exist. Stories are known through the oral tradition, not through texts. The major motifs go back to the earliest human experience (animism, totemism, animal-human kinships, etc.) but are reworked over generations to fit changing social and cultural conditions. The final form of the folktale gels by the late Middle Ages. The perspective is usually that of the rural lower classes. The stories concern poor peasants, helpful woodcutters, hired foot-soldiers, greedy kings, beautiful princes and princesses, and the like. The settings include agrarian villages, palaces, free cities, and forest clearings. Class distinctions are sharply drawn, with the middle class (doctors, merchants, counselors) portrayed especially unfavorably.

Stage 2. Late 17th and early 18th centuries. Folktales begin to be written down and stylized by Perrault, Mme. D'Aulnoy, Mme. de Beaumont, and others. An incipient literary tradition now parallels and competes with an oral tradition. The products of the literary tradition are called "fairy tales," and are written mainly for a courtly audience. Detail and emphasis reflect an aristocratic class position. The illiterate "masses," who once participated in their own cultural expressions, are excluded since fairy tales appear as literary "texts" and circulate among the elite.

Stage 3. Late 18th century. With the increasing cultural dominance of the bourgeoisie, folk and fairy tales are discredited (partly because they contain strong anti-middle class biases). Both are said to place too much emphasis on play and daydreaming, and not enough on discipline, industry or the utilitarian frame of mind. As "affronts to the rational mind," they are relegated to the nursery, though previously they had been primarily for adults.

Stage 4. Early 19th century. A Romantic protest occurs against both the utilitarian rejection of folk tales and their aristocratic stylization. A drive begins to collect the original tales of the oral tradition (Grimm brothers, 1812). At the same time, the Romantics introduce a new genre beyond the folk or fairy tale: the *Kunstmärchen*, or aristocratic fairy tale The *Kunstmärchen* make the artistic, or creative individual, the

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hero rather than the peasant or the prince. They reintroduce a utopian impulse and produce an explicit critique of capitalism and modern forms of alienation. They stress subjectivity, which was hardly acknowledged in folk tales. And it ushers in a more complex, open-ended, and formless mode of narration that corresponds to the reality of breakdown and uncertainty in the age itself.

Stage 5. Middle and late 19th century. The middle class overcomes its original hostility to folk and fairy tales. It now appropriates them for its own ends, and in so doing turns them into moral-didactic tales. The stories are sanitized; violence and unsocial behavior are largely taken out; material is reworked to emphasize appropriate ethical endings. To the extent that flights of fancy are occasionally approved, it is in order to provide a safety valve from the pressures of modern society. Consequently, wherever the imagination is given free reign it is at the price of isolating and rendering it harmless, since the boundaries within which it is acceptable are strictly controlled. Fantasy is seen as a refuge from social reality rather than a critique of it.

Stage 6. 1920s and 1930s. The moral possibilities of folk and fairy tales exhaust themselves. Two new utilizations replace them: first the politicization, then the commercialization, of the tales. The politicization is most evident in Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia. Under Hitler, the Grimms' tales are rewritten to stress racial and nationalistic themes, the value of the German folk community, and the glories of fighting, courage, and self-sacrifice. Under Stalin, the Party discovers that fairy tales are embellished folk tales and therefore a part of an authentic people's culture. From 1936 on, Soviet scholars are authorized to study the tales in order to discover in them the latent motifs of class struggle. The stories are then politicized and used as educational material.

Stage 7. The commercialization of folk and fairy tales is the second major development of the 1920s and 1930s. This commercialization includes not only the Disney films but, more importantly, the extensive use of the tales to sell products. Folk themes are presented in newspaper and magazine advertisements, on billboards and cereal boxes, in games and gift items (and more recently, in TV commercials and porno movies) solely for the purpose of evoking positive images, which in turn promote the consumption of commodities associated with these images. Here the violation of the tales is especially egregious because they are not allowed their own autonomy as stories, but rather are fractured and trivialized by the culture industry, and then harnessed to the pursuit of profit.

Today we are more or less in the last stage of development, and Zipes finds this greatly disturbing. Because of the enormous manipulative power of the media, the danger exists that folk and fairy tales will become wholly functional to modern capitalism. Their "liberating magic" would then be voided by the false impressions and misinterpretations we now have of them; they could soon become little more than disguised instruments of social control. With this prospect in mind, Zipes raises two important questions: First, is there any way such a thing can be prevented? And second, is it possible for the tales actually to become sources of opposition to an increasingly one-dimensional society? In Zipes' discussion these two questions frequently merge into one, since a solution to the first would go more than half way toward providing a solution for the second as well.

Essentially he offers not one but two answers. First of all, he suggests that we should go back to the original folk and fairy tales (presumably to stages 1 and 2) where we will find radical messages that can be drawn upon to oppose contemporary false consciousness. In Zipes' words, these earliest tales contain an "original magic" that must be revived (xi). They possess a symbolic and emancipatory potential that must be allowed to manifest itself again (xi, 17). What is emancipatory about these tales is that

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they "project other and better worlds" (3); they show the "feasibility of utopian alternatives" (3); they "chart the way for us to become masters of history and of our own destinies" (18); they contain powerful images of "politics and class struggle" (22), of "class conflict and rebellion" (24); and they reveal the power of the people when they decide to work together collectively (30).

Secondly, Zipes suggests that everyone needs to become more aware of the *history* of folk and fairy tales so that both their socio-cultural origins and their subsequent distortions can be understood. The culture industry seems powerful to him precisely because no one knows the history of the tales (or, one could add, of anything else). Most people appear to take the latest and most pervasive interpretation as a timeless reality; they lack a feeling for the historicity of things that may be one of the few qualities left that can rupture the synchronic integration of modern society. For this reason, Zipes argues for a greater cognizance of "diachronic historical development" (4). It is imperative to comprehend folk and fairy tales in relation to the changing social realities of which they are "symbolic depictions" (4). Unless the "historical forces that influence the formation" of the tales are grasped (21), most of the population will continue to be taken in by the latest gimmicks of contemporary advertising and marketing.

To summarize Zipes, then: as far as folk and fairy tales go, these are the two things which he thinks are available to, as Max Weber put it, "set against the machinery of modern life": a return to the original spirit of the tales on the one hand, and a firmer awareness of their historical development on the other. I take issue with Zipes on both of these points, but especially the first. Though his definition of the problem is excellent, his solutions appear to me somewhat faulty.

To begin with, the original socio-cultural context in which the tales had their greatest symbolic power has disappeared. This is particularly true of the folk tales that were indigenous to a precapitalistic oral tradition. Curiously, Zipes admits that what kept the radical-utopian elements of the tales alive was the "context in which the tales were actively received and retold" (123). But this is the one element that is now most definitely gone. Would it not follow that the radical force of the tales must necessarily vanish along with the context? And would they not have to be thrown into the scrap heap of history like similar "historically bound cultural expressions"? This is obviously a conclusion Zipes rejects, but it seems to be built into this part of his argument.

More important, though, is the question of why it is assumed that the earliest tales necessarily carry a superior ontological status. This appears to be implicit in Zipes' position, though the hasty assumption that what is original is best is by no means unique to him. Why is it so important to return to the first, the pure, the primordial state of things in order to find the way out of a dilemma? This attitude forgets that there is no such pure state prior to interpretation. Even the first folk takes were interpretations, or symbolic expressions, of a social world just barely understood, and all of the successive reworkings were nothing but interpretations of interpretations. In any case, when even the best of the original folk or fairy tales are examined, it becomes obvious that they do not convey only positive, emancipatory messages, but also many negative, regressive ones. Zipes, of course, acknowledges this but plays it down perhaps more than he should.[10] If the tales contain utopian projections and active, non-authoritarian heroes, and if at times they celebrate genuine world openness and the "capacity for universal relationships,"[11] it is also true that they very infrequently stress

10. Zipes mentions the regressive side of the tales in chapter II, and p. 170.

11. Max Lüthi, *Once Upon a Time. On the Nature of Fairy Tales,* trans. Lee Chadeayne and Paul Gottwald (New York, 1970), p. 143.

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collective action, rarely portray self-motivated characters (many "heroes" are propelled by outside forces like magic or misfortune), often manifest an obsession with power and how to acquire it, generally infer that the primary motivation in life is to achieve riches, a comfortable life, or an ideal marriage partner, and usually fail to question absolutistic ideologies. Established political structures are not often challenged, unless it is to re-establish a previous order illegitimately usurped.[12] Heirarchy remains; the lowly do not rise.[13] Shrewd, enterprising individuals occasionally get to the top of society, but if so they usually forget about their social origins.

Because the messages in the earliest folk and fairy tales are at best ambiguous, going back to their informing spirit to counter modern reified consciousness is not always helpful. More than Zipes does, I would argue that perhaps some of the later stages in the history of the tales contain a greater amount of radical potential than the earlier ones. Implicit in Zipes' work seems to be the notion that any utilization or re-utilization of a previous interpretation is necessarily a corruption. A reworking of any kind appears to represent a defilement or adulteration of the original intent, and therefore a fall from grace. But it is conceivable that later utilizations could be more inspiring and even more radical for the present *if they stimulate the imagination more vigorously*. In my opinion, what is really important about the tales is the amount of creative mental space they open up, the amount of active desire for something different, for another way of life, that they can stimulate.

For example, certain aspects of the middle class moral fairy tale (stage 5) may be potentially radical and might be worth developing further. To be sure, these tales separated the magical-imaginative realm from the practical-rational realm in order to compartmentalize fantasy, but as a result of this separation the Victorian imagination projected dreams and visions which were ultimately unassimilable into Victorian reality. Some of the fairy tales of Oscar Wilde or Lewis Carroll, for instance, were protests against utilitarian existence. These could be developed and accentuated in light of Zipes' goal of using fairy tales for their *Verfremdungseffekt*.

The Romantic *Kunstmärchen* may provide an even better example. In many respects, they encouraged a wilder and freer imagination than did the folk tales (which hardly envisioned an alternative to the monarchical system). Moreover, the *Kunstmärchen* projected a number of ideals that are still valuable — and radical — today; among them, the hope for a non-repressive community to be built in the future rather than returned to in the past; the concept of the free, autonomous subject who lives authentically from the heart; and the notion that liberation means personal, artistic, and erotic as well as social freedom. Admittedly, Zipes does acknowledge the radical possibilities of the *Kunstmärchen*, both in the book under review and in an earlier one.[14] In his view, Romantic fairy tales contain a "Great Refusal" and perhaps also an "an increase in human emancipation" (60) when compared to folk tales, but no doubt it would have taken another book to map out all the implications of this statement.

Even the commercialized folk and fairy tales (stage 7) are not wholly without

12. Volker Klotz has pointed out that order is often more important than justice, and sometimes disorder is introduced only to give just cause for a restoration of order (pp. 51-53)! See Volker Klotz, "Weltordnung im Märchen," *Neue Rundschau*, LXXXI (1970), n. 1, pp. 85-86.

13. Sometimes *apparently* lowly individuals are elevated to a higher status, but usually it is because they are *already* of noble blood (i.e., princes and princesses in disguise, or high-born victims of a witch's magic spell). By being "raised up," they are simply returned to the top of the hierarchy where they belong.

14. See Jack Zipes, *The Great Refusal: Studies of the Romantic Hero in German and American Literature* (Frankfurt, 1970).

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redeeming elements that could be reformulated and used against the system. In this regard, Zipes makes an important distinction between two processes that take place in the commercial stage: the instrumentalization and the commodification of folk motifs. By "instrumentalization" Zipes means the extensive restructuring of the tales in order to systematically reduce or negate their utopian potential. Here the tales are completely stripped of their integrity; their visionary power is depleted, their revolutionary hope erased, and they are made wholly functional to the interests of the capitalist system. Apparently no good whatever can come from instrumentalization since it is a process that kills the faculty of imagination itself. "Commodification," by contrast, seems less dangerous. It is a process by which the fantastic is projected into commodities and then worshipped or vicariously consumed by the public. Consequently, it does not destroy fantasy but only reifies it. Utopian wishes and dreams are preserved, though in repressive and manipulated forms. In a roundabout way, therefore, commodities not only harbor and sustain but sometimes even mobilize hopes, dreams, and desire that present-day culture is incapable of satisfying. To the extent that commodities inspire some degree of "free thinking," or arouse longings for wholeness or autonomy, no matter how misconceived, they contain a "subversive element of revolutionary hope" (132). Even at the center of the culture industry there are tensions and contradictions that can be turned against it.

In summary: the value of folk and fairy tales, it seems to me, should be determined not by what stage they come from, or their degree of historical authenticity, but by the amount of radical imagination they can provoke. It is essential to say "radical" imagination because just awakening the imagination is not enough. Once it has been kindled, it does not matter *how* it is expressed, what form it ultimately takes, and how it reacts back upon the social world that produced it. Does it, for instance, operate only within the framework of reference laid down by commodity fetishism, or does it break the magic spell? Does it undermine instrumental rationality, or is it complicit with it? A genuinely radical imagination, one would think, should at the very least accelerate a "current of action" in people, and inspire them to return to a social reality in order to change it in line with what had been imagined in their dreams and desires.[15]

This point is related to the second (admittedly minor) disagreement I have with Zipes mentioned a few pages earlier: namely, his conviction that people need to understand the history of folk and fairy tales in order to avoid false consciousness. I agree that history is important. At times it is one of the most effective weapons available against reification. But with regard to the tales, it may not be enough — it may, in fact, be the wrong direction — to argue that what is needed is a greater awareness of the history of the utilization of fantasy. In this particular case, historical knowledge might not be the most important ingredient and probably few people would make an effort to acquire it anyway. Far more effective, in my opinion, would be the evocation of striking, disruptive *mental images* in the present — images that carry their own forms of cognition and which have the ability to cut through manipulated consciousness instantly and decisively, in order to offer visions of a

15. As Rousseau summarized it two centuries ago, imagination can go in at least three different directions: toward fantasies about "castles in Spain" (i.e., imagination as a private refuge from an unpleasant social reality); towards devising methods for advancing more successfully within the system, in which case imagination meshes with the productive apparatus and fuels the ethos of society; or toward concepts and visions which shoot beyond the given, but only in order to return and critically judge it in light of what had been imagined. This last direction, which Rousseau called "moral imagination," is what I am here calling "radical imagination." See Marshall Berman, *The Politics of Authenticity* (New York, 1970), pp. 107-12.

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different kind of social reality. Perhaps this is what Walter Benjamin meant when he spoke of images from the past breaking through the "Now," and tearing apart the "empty homogeneous continuum of history to become actual in the present."[16] To my mind, it makes little difference what period of history these images come from, or whether one can trace their re-utilizations over time. What counts is that they be reintroduced today — and with force enough to jar people into new ways of thinking and imagining.

The way to do this best may be as follows. First, it should be assumed, as Zipes does assume, that folk and fairy tales are being flattened, commodified and instrumentalized, and that this has become a serious cultural problem today. Second, it should be noted that, in spite of all this, the result has not been a simple one-dimensionality. *All* the earlier stages of the tales — that is, their previous "utilizations" — continue to exist as survivals or residues from the past. No matter how discredited they may be, they have not altogether disappeared as autonomous forms within the culture. In Raymond Williams' words, they are, as residues, still "active in the cultural process,"[17] even though the culture industry may treat them as lags or useless carryovers from the past. Because these survivals have so far escaped complete assimilation, they contain elements that are oppositional, or at least alternative, to the status quo (and as T.W. Adorno has pointed out, whatever is alternative is often *seen as* oppositional by the powers that be). By recalling in vivid imagery the most potent of these residues from *all* periods of the past, a radical imagination could be awakened. Benjamin, of course, envisioned something close to this when he described the past not as a series of stepping stones to the present, but as *wholly in ruins* — and at the same time a dialectical force field replete with possibilities. What is needed, he thought, is both more imaginative recreation of and more hermeneutic reflection on these possibilities in order to disable the claims of the victors that they possess the *only* valid interpretations in the realm of culture, or in anything else for that matter.[18] Ernst Bloch, too, spoke in defense of the "non-synchronous." For him, as for Benjamin, the past seemed rich in unassimilated dreams, ideals, visions, and fantastic projections that could still radicalize the imagination and provide "new incarnations in the present."[19] This is certainly one direction that it would be possible to follow today.

There is yet another thing that might be done. Rather than attempt to activate the fantasy of the past, one could instead take hold of material at hand in contemporary culture and rework it, stressing the values of autonomy, liberation and non-conformity. As Zipes has pointed out in this book and elsewhere,[20] folk and fairy tales can be *umfunktioniert* — that is, made dysfunctional to the socialization process — if they are reformulated to convey critical messages. This could be achieved either by revising the old tales to suit modern conditions, or by starting fresh with new fairy tales that deal critically with present-day society. The tales could even be written or told differently in order to undermine the authority of the narrator and encourage more interaction within the audience. Such a movement of radical reconstruction has already begun, especially in West Germany, and Zipes has done a great deal to make

16. These words are Anson Rabinbach's, summarizing Benjamin's position. See Anson Rabinbach, "Ernst Bloch's *Heritage of Our Times* and Fascism," *New German Critique*, n. 11 (Spring, 1977), p. 8.

17. Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford, 1977), p. 122.

18. See Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York, 1969), pp. 253-64; see also Geoffrey Hartman, *Criticism in the Wilderness* (New Haven, 1980), pp. 75-76.

19. Ernst Bloch, cited in Zipes, *Breaking the Magic Spell*, p. 134.

20. See Jack Zipes, "Who's Afraid of the Brothers Grimm? Socialization and Politicization through Fairy Tales," *The Lion and the Unicorn*, III (Winter, 1979), n. 2, pp. 4-56.

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some aspects of it known in this country.[21] Perhaps the result may be yet another stage in the history of folk and fairy tales: a stage in which, more than ever before, social contradictions are uncovered, fetishistic relations demystified, and real (not utopian) alternatives pointed out. Zipes' stimulating book should be considered a major contribution to just such a reawakening, particularly for the English-speaking world. It remains now for creative writers (possibly Zipes himself) to complete the theory by embodying it in new forms of literary expression. *Hic Rhodus, hic Salta. Hier ist die Rose, hier tanze!*

David Gross

21. Besides his article cited in footnote 20 above, which includes extensive examples of recent radical fairy tales from Germany, see also Zipes, "Down with Heidi, Down with Struwelpeter, Three Cheers for the Revolution: Towards a New Socialist Children's Literature in West Germany," *Children's Literature*, V (Philadelphia, 1976), pp. 162-180.

Leszek Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism*. Vol. I: *The Founders*. Vol. II: *The Golden Age*. Vol. III: *The Breakdown*. Oxford University Press, 1978. $19.95 each volume.*

The status of a handbook which Kolakowski accords to his three-volume work on the history of Marxism underemphasizes both its importance and purpose to present the philosophy of praxis as the core of Marxism. Yet, Kolakowski's history of Marxism contradicts this goal, for Marxism's greatest success has very little to do with the philosophy of praxis: i.e., the period of the Second International whose mechanistic philosophy stands furthest away from the philosophy of praxis. This contradiction is symptomatic of a more general one underlying the work: his philosophical criticism does not fit "historical facts." For what Kolakowski wants to uncover is the *philosophical weakness* of the philosophy of praxis, and link it to the totalitarian structure of "actually existing socialism." Yet, he wishes to avoid any mechanical correlation between ideas and social movements by following the contradictions within the ideas themselves that led to this particular development. Thus, Kolakowski's attempt is historically misconceived in so far as the philosophical bases of Leninism and Stalinism arose out of the mechanistic philosophy of the Second International and not out of, as Kolakowski himself admits, the philosophy of praxis. It is philosophically misconceived in so far as his interpretation of Marxism as a philosophy of praxis, although not incorrect, greatly reduces the complexity of Marx's work.

Rather than a handbook, the work is actually an *ethical criticism* of "actually existing socialism." What, then, is the faulty core of the philosophy of praxis? For Kolakowski, it is Marxism's anthropological assumption of the perfectability of both man and society — an assumption that also underlies Marx's philosophy of history. This salvation of man and society takes place in history. But this concretion is false for the inevitability of such a realization is assumed beforehand, and hence it forgets the contingency of human existence and the inevitability of evil. Because of this deification of man, Kolakowski links the Marxian idea to the myth of Prometheus. The link rests on the fact that Prometheus had not only given fire to mankind, but had also suppressed the evils afflicting it, until Pandora released them, along with something else that Prometheus had imprisoned: hope. The outcome of

*A review of these same volumes by James Miller has already appeared in *Telos* (No. 46: Winter 1980-1981, pp. 190-196).

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the myth affirms both the irreducible contingency of existence as well as the possibility of hope. Such an assertion is not foreign to the later Marx, but it is absent in the early Marx, whose conception of the proletariat as the universal class freeing humanity through revolution does not escape Kolakowski's accusation of Prometheanism. And Kolakowski rightly attributes such an interpretation of Marx to the "young" Lukacs of *History and Class Consciousness*.

For Lukacs the proletariat was the subject-object of history, which, despite capitalistic reification, was the only real historical force that could overcome it. Given the untenability of such a position, Kolakowski's Lukacsian interpretation of Marx raises once more the question of the significance of these early works. It was against a positivistic and bureaucratic Marxism that the humanistic potential of the early Marx had been emphasized. According to Kolakowski, however, this humanistic potential contains its totalitarian opposite. Yet, these criticisms do not undermine the theory of alienation contained in it. Secondly, the fact that, according to Kolakowski, Lukacs's philosophy of praxis may have provided a better philosophical basis for Leninism than Lenin could himself does not change the superfluity of Lukacs's justification. Whatever totalitarian potential the theory of the proletariat contained was not realized through any philosophy of praxis, but through a theory of the party. Therefore, although there is no question about the mythological status of the proletariat as the subject-object of history, it is possible to provide a more plausible interpretation of the relation between Marxism and actually existing socialism by emphasizing the productivistic tendencies of Marx's later work which reduce the history of the human species to the labor process. The political outcome of this productivism is the projection of impossibly technocratic and authoritarian utopias, projections which did take place through the theoretical mediation of Engels. Thus, although the criticism of Marx's early philosophy is valid, the philosophy of praxis cannot be held responsible for the faults that Kolakowski assigns to it.

Kolakowski sees continuity within Marx's work, and with the Platonic-Christian tradition. To show this Kolakowski must reconstruct the prehistory of Marxism in terms of the concern with the contingency of human existence. The significance of this problem is that it questions the possibility of man's reconciliation with the divinity. Thus, the history of philosophy posits the question of the perfectability of man and the world. The philosophies of Kant and Hegel embody two possible answers to this question. Kant tries to draw the limits beyond which reason must not go, whereas Hegel eternalizes the contingent by making it a moment of the Spirit's self-creation.

The Kantian counterpoint to the discussion of Hegel informs the whole work. Here, Kolakowski opts for a regulative, as opposed to a constitutive, conception of reason. Kant acknowledges that contingency is irreducible and that there are no forms of knowledge that can provide access to unconditional being. The concepts of pure reason — God, freedom, and immortality — are no longer within the bounds of theoretical reason, but within that of practical reason. Even though Kant acknowledges the irreduciblity of contingency, he also acknowledges the possibility of the infinite progress toward perfection over and against contingency, and of an infinite progress of humanity in its emancipation from nature. In other words, Kant's separation of ethical from factual questions stands as a model for Kolakowski's critique of all synthetic precepts that seek to overcome this irreducible dichotomy, whether they be the Hegelian "Geist" or the Marxian "Proletariat."

For Kolakowski the repression of ethical questions within Marxism begins with the young' Marx rejecting the 'young' Hegelians' normative conception of reason, or reason's right to judge the rationality of reality in the light of its own principles.

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Instead, Marx proposes "to find the rational in the real itself" in order to expose the dynamic whereby history and man's self-awareness can be reconciled. The objective is to create a theory of progressive rationality, in which the collective subject is the proletariat, whose status as a universal class becomes objectively determined. For Kolakowski the philosophy of praxis's projection of a fully transparent society, wherein the identity of reason and reality is to be achieved, gives a false historical necessity to the proletariat's development. It results in the repression of ethical questions as justifications of the desirability of socialism give way to the affirmation of its necessity. At the same time, this logic substitutes strategic decision-making for processes of enlightenment as the thesis of historical necessity obviates the need for practical discourse. Thus, in the hands of a party machine, this thesis justifies the cancellation of such discourse, and the latest party decision can be legitimated as expressions of historical necessity.

The eschatological content of Marx's philosophy of praxis also underlies his anthropology, according to Kolakowski, because the theory of alienation is also a theory of necessary reconciliation. The "primitive term" of Marx's anthropology is labor or objectification: the process of exchange between man and nature in which man externalizes and develops his species-being. Yet, for Kolakowski, Marx's anthropology embodies a vision of the reconciliation of man with nature, of man's essence with his existence, and of man's ultimate destiny with his empirical being which is inherently utopian (Vol. I, p. 141). The anthropology of the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* does, indeed, emphasize the possibility of reconciliation, but, as the work of Heller and Markus has shown, the theory of objectification does not fall without it. Moreover, the link between objectification and reconciliation is forsaken in Marx's later works. Marx's actual theoretical trajectory leads from a philosophy of praxis, whose weakness stems from its eschatological tendencies, to an economic science whose weakness lies in its elimination of the concept of practice, that concludes in an economistic view of social change.

Clearly, Marx's early philosophy was based on two propositions. First, he sought to evince the validity of ideology critique as a critical method; a method that entailed the acceptance of basic values, such as freedom of the press, and critically opposing them to the reality of press censorship. Second, Marx banked on his notion of the proletariat as the force that would realize these values. The notion of the proletariat as history's privileged instrument becomes a privileged idea in Kolakowski's critique because it enables him to efface the difference between a totalizing principle — the proletariat's praxis — and a totalitarian society. If Marxism implies the identification of social unity and freedom, then, "if we consider that there can be a technique for establishing social unity, then despotism is a natural solution of the problem in as much as it is the only known technique for the purpose" (Vol. I, p. 480). Of course, Leninism as a technique becomes the historical means for transforming this totalizing principle into a totalitarian society; yet, Leninism's only totalizing principle — the party's commands — is not Marx's.

To concretize this point, Kolakowski outlines the specific meaning of "scientific socialism" to the Second International traditions that guided Lenin. "Socialism was a theory that could only be the result of scientific observation and not of the spontaneous evolution of the proletariat.... This theory, later adopted by Lenin, of socialist consciousness implanted in the spontaneous working-class movement from outside, is a direct result of the naturalistic interpretation of consciousness and the Darwinist interpretation of social processes in general" (Vol. II, p. 42). Yet, how is Leninism a possible interpretation of Marx's Hegelian interpretation of consciousness? Even

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Kolakowski acknowledges that scientific consciousness is for Marx merely an articulation of elemental consciousness and is not imposed upon it (Vol. II, p. 53). Kolakowski cannot argue, on the one hand, that the philosophy of praxis is amenable to totalitarian conclusions and, on the other hand, that the philosophy of the Second International has nothing to do with the philosophy of praxis. Therefore, Kolakowski cannot historically ground the link between Marxism and Leninism on the basis of the philosophy of praxis.

Actually, Leninism embodies two standpoints that more flexible Marxists abandoned: a reductionist view of historical materialism, and an elitist conception of the party. It also embodies the theoretical apotheosis of the concept of class by the party with a practical disregard for the so-named revolutionary classes. But, once again, Kolakowski's genealogical attribution is inconsistent, for, in one place (Vol. II. p. 361), he argues that Lenin, like Marx, treated universal values such as freedom as class-determined and, therefore, eliminable. In another place (Vol. II, p. 383), however, he has a more reasonable view, admitting that Marx and Engels did not regard all human values as class-conditioned and relatable, in the final instance, to the economic. Yet, there is no doubt that Lenin has made such reductionism canonical for mainstream, 20th-century Marxism (Vol. II, p. 255). The complement of Lenin's theoretical stance is his extreme strategism and elitism in practice, which reduced universal values to class-conditioned ones. His positioning of the party as the sole mediation of revolutionary values made the working class into an instrument of the party, rather than a substantive agent (Vol. II, p. 373). In turn, as a means to an end, Lenin could use the party to instrumentalize the rest of society. Thus, the 19th-century conflation of the analytically separate levels of theory, the process of enlightenment, and decision-making, reached its totalitarian conclusion in Lenin's so-called "theory" of the party,[1] which became "the ideological basis of a party dictatorship over the working class and the whole of society" (Vol. II, p. 392).

Therefore, it is more than the peasant and national questions separating Leninism from the Marxist tradition (Vol. II, p. 384). Leninism presumes a closed, deterministic conception of history that will not admit of the independence of art, human freedom, legal principles and philosophical debates from class struggle and the history of production, and results in the apotheosis of ideology by the party machine which controls and directs any spontaneous energies and movements. Once Bolshevism came to power, and its ideology evolved into a science of legitimation, it posed as the techno-bureaucratic solution of all human relations and problems.

Consequently, the party and its state canceled the independence of civil society and, thus, the possibility of that society's self-solution of its problems. "Thus, the new society was to be built by means of increasing technical and administrative knowledge on the one hand, and coercion and intimidation on the other" (Vol. II, p. 486), which is the logical end for a society based on the proposition that the elimination of private property eliminates dehumanization. As Santamaria and Manville[2] argue, the emphasis Lenin places on productive forces disappears in his analysis of the transition period. Instead, the revolution becomes merely a political abolition of private property, while retaining the previous economic base and forgetting the Marxian distinction between socialist and capitalist socialization. As Lenin put it: "Soviets plus electrification!" Similarly, as Traub confirms,[3] Lenin looked very favorably on Tayloristic management techniques after the revolution. And as Castoriadis[4]

1. Paul Piccone, "Of Infantile Diseases and Senile Diagnoses," *Telos*, n. 33, pp. 145-151.
2. Ulysses Santamaria and Alain Manville, "Lenin and the Transition," *Telos*, n. 27, p. 83.
3. Reiner Traub, "Lenin and Taylor," *Telos*, n. 37, p. 83.
4. Cornelius Castoriadis, "The Social Regime in Russia," *Telos*, n. 38, p. 46.

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concludes, one cannot call Russia socialist, because it shares with capitalism the same social imaginary significations: the expansion of rational mastery as an abstract pseudo-rationality. Or, again, as Lenin puts it: "Learn from the bourgeoisie!" Ultimately, Lenin's bureaucratism came to its logical end with the *Rabkrin*, or the creation of a bureaucracy to control bureaucracy, which was headed and used by Stalin (Vol. II, p. 490).

Both Lenin's and Stalin's rules were based on the subsumption of society under a party-state. For Kolakowski, any difference is only one of degree: "It was only in Stalin's day that the whole spiritual life of the peoples of the Soviet Union was submerged in a universal flood of mendacity" (Vol. II, p. 317). Furthermore, Kolakowski is arguing that there is the strongest possible link between Marx, Lenin and Stalin. Kolakowski suggests that Stalinism equals Marx's epistemology plus Lenin's notion of the party, which although theoretically possible, is not historically true. Indeed, Kolakowski's equation: "truth equals proletarian world view equals Marxism equals the party's world view equals the prouncements of the party leadership equals those of the supreme leader" may describe Lenin's conceptual slide (Vol. III, p. 4), but it does not arise out of any Leninist philosophy of praxis. Kolakowski attributes this negation of mediating social institutions to Marx's doctrine of perfect unity that allows no "bourgeois mediating institutions," such as representative political bodies or civil liberties. Here, Kolakowski significantly distorts Marx's critical intention, for the idea behind Marx's early writings, and his writings on the Paris Commune, was the possible real subsumption of the state under civil society, and not vice versa. Indeed, some argue that Marx accepted the liberal mythology on the superfluous nature of the state.

Marx's critique of mediating institutions must always be seen in this light, otherwise one can falsely conclude that Stalinism merely realizes "Marx's doctrine of perfect unity" via "institutional means" (Vol. III, pp. 160-161). However, what Kolakowski says concerning Stalinism is beyond criticism, especially his remarks on the unprecedented concentration of political, economic and military power that marks the nature of the Soviet regime, but can one still argue that Marxism is still needed to legitimize that power (Vol. III, p. 166). Yet, after Khrushchev's revelations, the Soviet consciousness instead has become totally cynical, and more traditional legitimation devices have now taken Marxism's place. In this context, Kolakowski's remarks on the parvenu nature of Soviet culture reaffirms the re-traditionalization of legitimation within the Soviet state: "Stalin was the idol of parvenu Russia, the incarnation of its dreams of glory. The parvenu state must have a pyramid of power and a leader who is worshipped even while he scourges his subordinates" (Vol. III, p. 144).

Western Marxism presents itself as the history of the re-invention and disintegration of the philosophy of praxis; and, for Kolakowski, it thus represents the breakdown of Marxism as such. Kolakowski's interpretation of Marxism necessarily concludes in his discussion of Lukacs. Yet, Lukacs's project is unique in the socialist tradition in its attempt to find in a Hegelian philosophy of praxis the justification for the Leninist theory of the party (Vol. III, p. 268). Marx never postulated the need for any particular organizational form of proletarian praxis. Lukacs's achievement, then, was to re-create a philosophy of history, which links Hegel to the 'young' Marx and justifies Lenin's pragmatic political practice. In doing so, Lukacs distinguishes between the proletariat's empirical consciousness and the consciousness first ascribed to it by theory and, ultimately, the party. Kolakowski argues that the authoritarian political consequences which arise from this conception result from Lukacs's critique of empiricism, in so far as a disrespect for the facts entails a disrespect for people's actual

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consciousness (Vol. III, pp. 281-282). Actually, the theory of ascribed consciousness may harmonize with the criticism of empiricism, but it is not drawn from it.[5] The criticism of empiricism derives from Lukacs's methodological argument on the centrality of the concept of totality in any dialectical social theory; whereas the theory of ascribed consciousness reworks the Weberian notion of objective possibility which tries to ground the place of a collective subject in history. Only the latter involves authoritarian political consequences; thus, it is possible to preserve Lukacs's methods and social theory of reification, while rejecting his philosophy of praxis and history. Indeed, it is the latter that gives to Marxism an irrational and anti-scientific form, not the former (Vol. III, p. 300).

According to Kolakowski, the continuation of Lukacs's method by the Frankfurt School is unfruitful: "This difference makes the theory more flexible and less dogmatic, but also obscure and inconsistent" (Vol. III, p. 355). For Kolakowski, this tension surfaces strongly in genetic and epistemological criteria in Horkheimer's programmatic essay *Traditional and Critical Theory*. To eliminate the epistemological criterion would have led to the definition of truth solely in terms of its social origin, with the consequent possibility of reducing truth to the standpoint of the proletariat; at the same time, to eliminate the genetic criterion would have necessitated the elaboration of epistemological criteria within a closed methodological framework. Thus, Kolakowski concludes that critical theory "exists by virtue of its own ambiguity" (Vol. III, p. 356). It exists by its unwillingness to rely on the standpoint of the proletariat, and by its identification of truth as a product of theoretical self-reflection and fantasy. As Horkheimer pointed out, the proletariat cannot guarantee correct knowledge because of its inability to become aware of its situation; thus, he denies any subject-object identity or, at best, posits it as a future possibility that only a truly transparent society would embody. Consequently, critical theory would have lapsed into traditional theory if it had not abondoned proletarian consciousness. It would have become an empirical social-psychology of the proletariat's social state. Therefore, truth instead arises from the theoretician's self-reflection, which does not merely elaborate the implicit theoretical consciousness of the class. What then relates the theorist and the proletariat, given critical theory's rejection of the concept of ascribed consciousness? Horkheimer maintains, "If, however, the theoretician and his specific object are seen as forming a dynamic unity with the oppressed class so that his presentation of societal contradictions is not merely an expression of the concrete historical situation but also a force within it to stimulate change, then his real function emerges."[6] With such a position, the autonomy of both theory and practice is preserved, and their dynamic dialogue precludes their identification. For Kolakowski, however, critical theory represents the "breakdown of Marxism" simply because of its detachment from the Lukacsian position — *his* philosophy of praxis!

Ultimately, this work marks a shift in Kolakowski's thought for the worse. Instead of remaining an internal critic of Marxism, he has moved to the outside; he has become anti-Marxist, but not anti-socialist. He has rejected his earlier insight into the self-reflexive nature of Marxism, and has now totally reduced it to the dogmatic structure of a theogony. Marx now has become the high priest of the philosophy of praxis, who celebrates the "black Mass" of the Gulag. I have tried to show that such an assimilation is neither historically correct, nor hermeneutically satisfying as an interpretation of Marx's thought. Yet, beyond all this, it is not so much Kolakowski's rejection of Marxism which is in question, but his apparent rejection of all radical anthropologies

5. Andrew Arato, "Lukacs' Theory of Reification," *Telos*, No. 11, p. 52.
6. Max Horkheimer, *Critical Theory* (New York: Seabury Press, 1972), p. 215.

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as man-deifying, along with the absurd corollary that "man-deifying" anthropologies constitute *totalizing* principles in which the theoretical seed of *totalitarianism* can be seen. Marxism for Kolakowski has become *the* world-historical representative of a very old genre, and in opposition to it Kolakowski counterposes another very old genre for which he cannot, however, invent any new terms.

Thus, Kolakowski has also ironed out the antinomies in his own work in favor of recycling the old Christian dogmas of evil, original sin, and grace. As he contends, "our natural forces can find no safe shelter against evil; all we can do is practice the act of balancing opposing dangers. And this is precisely what the Christian tradition affirms in its statement that certain results of original sin are inescapable, and that if salvation is possible it can only be through grace." Evil is not eradicable for Kolakowski; yet, Marx's critique of capitalism argues that it is. Thus, the myth of Prometheus, which animated Marx, must be abandoned; it suggests that humankind can aspire to the absolute, but fails to realize that such efforts result in greater bondage. More appropriate than Prometheus is Nebuchadnezzar, "who was degraded to the condition of a beast when he tried to exalt himself to the dignity of God."[7]

Ironically, Kolakowski, who had argued that the great philosophies developed out of an antinomy between self-reflection and identity thinking, now has collapsed these antinomies due to his excessive fear of identity thinking. However, this does not result in greater self-reflexivity, but in the exchange of one religion for another. For the concepts of original sin and grace are more dogmatic than those of hope and struggle. At least the latter are grounded in an open, future-oriented anthropology, whereas the former are closed, tradition-bound doctrines based on an ideologically inspired pessimism. Kolakowski has chosen to serve as a priest in a very old religion; a priest who, no doubt, recognizes human frailty and does not wish to aspire to any absolute, but a priest nevertheless. And in this aspect of Kolakowski's thought we see the "equally unbearable traits of senility,"[8] which Kolakowski sees as incurable. They arise not out of the philosophy of the priest, but out of that of a gloomy one.

Naturally, for such a gloomy theologian, Kolakowski's prime target must be what he sees as "happy theologians" such as Marx. Kolakowski, who has produced in this work a (Popperian) scientistic critique of (Marxian) non-science, now engages in a theological critique of non-theology. Kolakowski's interpretation of Marx ends in Marx's apotheosis. Yet, Saint Karl is a bad saint: "In this sense Marxism performs the function of a religion, and its efficacity is of a religious character. But it is a caricature and a bogus form of religion, since it presents its temporal eschatology as a scientific system which religious mythologies do not purport to be" (Vol. III, p. 526). Yet, aside from this philosophical condemnation, when it comes down to specifying the link between Marxism and actually existing socialism, Kolakowski only weakly claims that the whole idea of communism for Marx could be summed up in the abolition of private property. But Marx's thought is much more complex and ambivalent than the terse formulas he articulated from time to time. However, there is no doubt as to where Marxism does function as a "temporal eschatology" and where it does only mean the "abolition of private property." Yet, the cost of buying into such a hermeneutical package is the complete inability to appreciate today's Western radicalism: a failure that distorts Kolakowski's reading of Marx, Western Marxism, and the New Left.

Paul Harrison

7. Leszek Kolakowski, "Can the Devil be Saved," *Encounter*, July, 1974, p. 12.
8. Leszek Kolakowski, "The Priest and the Jester," in *Toward a Marxist Humanism* (New York, 1969), p. 35.

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Boris Komorov, *The Destruction of Nature in the Soviet Union*. White Plains, New York: M.E. Sharpe. 149 pages. $15.00.

Among many on the left, it has been hoped that the multitude of problems surrounding ecological problems can be avoided by establishing socialism. Indeed, many have taken the simplistic position that *only* socialism can help ecologically. Thus, some have proclaimed that socialism must be the first priority of all "right thinking people," and relegated ecological concerns to "later." On their side, it can be argued that socialism does not *have* to constantly expand production. Therefore, it does not *have* to generate the banging against ecological limits that capitalism *necessarily* brings upon the planet. The last part of this argument is certainly correct. The reduction of nature to an economic calculus, plus a need for constant economic expansion, develops a view of forests, rivers, workers, oceans and birds which is incompatible with long run human habitation. But the first part of the argument — that socialism does not have such problems — requires more scrutiny.

Perhaps, theoretically socialism has an edge over capitalism in adjusting human life to ecological balance. And it is possible, within theoretical socialism, for all to rationally agree to certain forms of restraint which are ecologically sound. The capitalist system *is* opaque to the will of its members, running out of anyone's control — à la Marx's image of the fetishism of commodities. Theoretically, the general will could evolve and be decisive under a socialist organization. But too much theory can blind and it is important to examine current expressions of socialism as relevant to this sort of discussion, without making the error of reducing the ideal of socialism to its current expressions. In this light, Komorov's book is extremely sobering. This is a *Samizdat* tract, and Komorov is a pseudonym for someone currently working in a ministry in the USSR. Marshall Goldman takes it as authentic, given the "insider's" knowledge it presents. I have no way of knowing — but its documentation of the rape of nature so well coheres with what is happening in the West that I have no reason to doubt the genuineness of the document.

Is the ecological "problem" more or less serious in the Soviet Union than in the industrial West? Komorov's answer is interestingly complex. On the one hand, things in the USSR have not gotten quite as far as they have in the West, for the USSR is still "underdeveloped," not yet locked into an automobile society, etc. So things are a bit better, because industrialization has not gone as far. On the other hand, maybe they are worse. Within the USSR, information is tightly controlled. This makes it much harder for the symbolic disassurance to occur which is needed for meaningful change. This ignorance of the true state of ecological problems in the Soviet Union extends from average citizens upwards to highest levels within ministries making decisions of significant ecological impact. Without such information, the public need for the changes required cannot develop. It is like not knowing that cigarettes affect the lungs, or not knowing that rain is occasionally as acidic as vinegar. Without the information, there does not arise the desire for change. Alas, the information itself does not make the necessary changes either.

Komorov's story of the destruction of Soviet nature is rich and well told. One of the "showcases" of the Soviet Union is Lake Baikal, a huge lake with some species of life unique to Baikal. A few years ago, an article appeared in the New York Times no less, touting the environmental triumph of the lake, noting how it had been cleaned up and was now beautifully clear. This information has also been displayed around the USSR and sounds wonderful. A success story! However, the reality is something else. Baikal

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has been made a showcase, yet its fundamental ecology is being steadily eroded. A unique crustacean called epishura forms the bottom of the food chain in Baikal. A huge pulp and paper combine's effluent is slowly killing off this little critter, and the consequences of killing the bottom of a food chain are slow, predictable and catastrophic. Is this not known? Yes, in a few reports which get "returned" for revision. And why? Because products of this combine are deemed "strategic interests" — i.e., the Ministry of Defense wants them. The situation is something like the disastrous consequences on the water supplies of the Southwest contemplated by the MX missile, with the difference that the information is deliberately censored. More lead and zinc mines are planned around Baikal which will have further serious ecological effects, and which are protected from criticism by being in the "strategic interest" category. "Officially" there are no signs of ecological crises in the USSR, although they are omnipresent in the West, but this is due to the control of information, not any basic difference in the exploitation of nature. "The composition of the air, of our drinking water and sea water is a state secret" in the USSR (17).

A further gap between information and reality prevails in the stringent standards adopted in the USSR concerning air and water quality. Paul DeBruhl's *The Zapping of America* noted the stringent standards regulating exposure to microwaves in the Soviet Union, trying to alert us to the microwave hazards we have surrounded ourselves with in the USA, ranging from ovens to television transmissions to airports. What he probably was not in a position to know is that although such standards are high in the USSR, they are a particularly foul abstraction — in that they are regularly unmet and ignored as a basis for policy decisions. For example, the level of PCB incidence in the North Atlantic is only one order of magnitude below a lethal dose. Polychlorinated biphenyls are highly deadly, disrupting the reproductive cycle of fish, birds and mammals — and is universally regarded as a dangerous toxin which must be regulated — in the USSR as well as the West. The Swedes detected large quantities of PCB flowing from Russian rivers and requested that action be taken. Soviet scientists said that it was impossible and that PCB was not produced in the Soviet Union. After considerable back and forth, measurements were taken of Russian waters and virtually all waters were found to be contaminated with PCB. How did this happen? The military was producing it, without the knowledge of any other ministries. As this passes from the water to the blood of Soviet citizens, Komorov makes a point not irrelevant to all of us: "In the most literal sense strategic interests pervade our whole being whether we want them or not" (34). Beyond the PCB case, Komorov points to the pollutants of industrial life omnipresent in the USSR, as well as the West, such as oil, phenol, zinc, sodium, chlorine, sulphur, lead, boron, beryllium, silver.... But "officially" there is no problem because standards are high — but not enforced. Positive projects are befouled with incompetency. Thus, efforts at land reclamation in the USSR have given rise to a local joke: "the reclaimers have adopted the slogan 'Turn all swamps into deserts.'".

In general, what emerges is a story which could also be told of the West. Industrial production has had consequences on the ecosystem which are profound and slow in developing. Our old ways have been using a certain elasticity in ecosystems which is now beginning to show signs of disappearing. Usually, the signs only appear after serious harm has been done. The discovery that certain bird species couldn't reproduce because of DDT in their systems precedes the appearance of DDT in human mothers' breast milk. The time lag between action and result is critical in ecological problems. When the problems finally become obvious, there may be no solution. Most

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efforts to correct the situation have led to further problems, because they have not been done from a basis of true understanding of the depth of the problem. Thus, we solve food problems by irrigation projects which lead to excessively saline land a few decades later, diminishing global carrying capacity in the long run. We build hydroelectric plants to get electricity and flood agricultural land. The USSR had flooded the equivalent of four Belgiums doing hydroelectric projects! In the Ohio Valley industrial pollution is objected to and "solved" by building taller smoke stacks. Some time later, the increasingly acid rain leads to the elmination of fish life in the high lakes of the Adirondacks of New York state. Now declining agricultural productivity in New York is being attributed to acidic rain. We bury lethal chemicals and they begin to turn up in our drinking water. Our solutions deepen the problem and make the final costs far higher. Komorov is surely right that we in the West are more apt to arrive at solutions because the bad news is available to us. However, the current trends in the West do not actually seem much better, even though we can know them.

The legal system in the USSR is of no use in solving ecological problems according to Komorov. Since *in theory* there are no conflicts in a socialist system, there are no conflicts. This slight of hand is accomplished administratively. Any department in the USSR interested in conservation, which wishes to overrule a department doing an ecologically damaging project, must get the consent of those very departments to raise the issue at a higher level. Thus, no official conflicts arise. And at the level of the public? According to Komorov, there is no "public" for strong environmental laws. The information system does not develop such a public. But even if they knew, is the average Soviet (or American?) citizen willing to sacrifice present consumption for their grandchildrens' health? Komorov's comment seems to me to apply to the West as well as the Soviet Union: "In our profoundly materialist society the spiritual links with the past, with our forbears, have been weakened to the extreme; and one can say that our frail spiritual bonds with our descendents are also almost completely lacking. The natural processes that man is disrupting now extend far in time beyond the frame of life of one or two generations." In a way, that seems to be the nub of the problem. We have lost traditional ways of restraining ourselves, have developed means of really upsetting the whole nest of ecosystems, and we don't care about much except ourselves. We shall leave a bitter harvest for our children, and they shall curse us.

Komorov continues with more details as he enters the realm of political corruption and its relation to the environment in the USSR. Snowmobiles are there, and Yahoo Generals hunting polar bears with machine guns from helicopters, elks shot just for their tongues, and so on. The only advantage that Komorov sees for the USSR is that they started down this path later than the West. He sees the prospects for change towards the better as dim. In the Soviet Union according to Komorov, the top class will not feel the pinch of the increasing price of ecological decay, while the bottom 85% will not be allowed to know the full story. This short book should certainly put to rest the easy assumption that "socialism" is any key to solving the ecological crises we face. Our problems — and they are global — go much deeper than who "owns" the means of production. In Pogo's words, "we have met the enemy and he is us."

Andrew McLaughlin

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Youssef Ishaghpour, *Paul Nizan. Une figure mythique et son temps.* Paris: Le Sycomore, 1980. 253 pages.

Ishaghpour dedicates this book to Lucien Goldmann whose studies on Lukàcs, Heidegger and the sociology of the novel become the main tools for a very engaging historico-philosophical portrait of Nizan, the French Communist Party militant and intellectual. The name of Nizan, who died in combat in 1940, has been consistently, though often uneasily, associated with that of Jean-Paul Sartre. Rather than defusing the "myth of Nizan" built almost single-handedly by Sartre's reviews and especially his introduction to *Aden Arabie* (1960), Ishaghpour works clearly on its side. So much so that, despite a deeply sympathetic yet consistently critical Nizan presentation, the book concludes with a highly laudatory appraisal of Sartre's subsequent evolution in the context of *littérature engagée* and existential Marxism.

In many ways, while the Sartre connection will probably remain a major attraction to Nizan's lifework, the remarks on Sartre couldn't have come at a better time. Published just a few days before his death, the book is sure to strengthen that connection but, in the end, this can only add to an already valuable study. The legacy of the literature of commitment and the Marxist existentialist movement lead the author to discriminating insights on the ideological climate that, by May 1968, set the stage for a comeback of Nizan's battlecries. The bewildering detail of this story has remained largely unknown in this country. In fact, the 1971 Monthly Review edition of Nizan's *The Watchdogs* (1932), aside from some vague allusions to "Paris" and "Debray," did nothing to clarify the exact relevance of Nizan's Marxism to the French May. Ishaghpour's unassuming scholarship gives us a much better picture of the ideological turmoil which, with considerable help from some thirty years of murky PCF politics, was to revamp the original tragets of Nizan's militancy to include the French Communist Party itself.

At the start, Ishaghpour's fundamental objectives appear modest. On the one hand, he wants to clear the memory of a militant who was victimized by the PCF, essentially for his non-conformist and primarily *literary* militancy which eventually estranged him from the party and brought him dismissal and sordid recriminations of "betrayal." On the other hand, this detailed and critical analysis of Nizan's praxis (literature), reveals a sincere but totally impatient intellectual rebel who had consistently misread, distorted and, for the most part, ignored the subtleties of Marxian thought. But, since Nizan did not live to become a writer of the first magnitude (Sartre's fervor notwithstanding), his attacks on the intellectual establishment did not acquire broader interest until 1968, under very different circumstances: at the Paris barricades, his name and the message from his *Watchdogs* became revolutionary catchphrases, this time against the PCF as well; Sartre, meanwhile, was hardly allowed an appearance before being hissed out of the Sorbonne.

Ishaghpour's low-keyed, deceptively easy style clears the Althusserian and post-structuralist smokescreen obscuring the theoretical poverty around 1968 to neatly tie together all underlying loose ends. His careful reading of texts convincingly situates Nizan's misguided "humanism" on exactly the same side with Althusser's scientism and high-handed impatience with Marxian philosophical concepts and categories. In contrast, argues the author, by the late fifties, Sartre had come to see through the horrors of theoretical and actual Stalinism. Thus, while initially inspired by Nizan's militant humanist problematic, with his 1960 *Critique de la raison dialectique*, Sartre

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achieved a fertile synthesis of existential Marxism, one that divorced him completely from the coming onslaught of "scientific" Marxists, structuralists, *et al.* (pp. 229-45).

For the most part, *Paul Nizan* is a contextual portrayal of a "mythical figure and his time," a man who had "no public existence except that of a party intellectual" whose literature was "driven by a single question: loyalty and its opposite — betrayal" (225-6). Ishaghpour traces Nizan's early preoccupation with the problem of death and its literary transformation along Nizan's road from Sorel-inspired ultraleftism to Stalinism. Detailed discussions center on *Aden Arabie* and *The Watchdogs* (1932), *Antoine Bloyé* (1933), *Présentation d'une ville* (1934), *Le Cheval de Troie* (1935), *Sindobod Trocikiston* (1935), *Les Matérialistes de l'Antiquité* (1936) and *La Conspiration* (1938), together with a complete analysis of Nizan's minor texts.

On specific themes, Ishaghpour provides lucid comments on the early and intense stages of *littérature engagée* and Nizan's relationship to Malraux, Aragon, Breton, surrealist aesthetics and PCF politics. The book-by-book historical exposition undertakes conceptual juxtapositions of Nizan and Marx as well as Lukàcs and Heidegger. While noting some affinity between Heidegger's *Sorge* and Nizan's existential anguish, Ishaghpour points to substantive divergences on interpreting the present world and, within it, subjectivity (38ff). On a political plane, the overriding theme regarding Nizan's militancy is his unqualified loyalty to a Leninist-type party — an attitude that, according to Ishaghpour, was absent in Marx, Gramsci, Luxemburg and, to some extent, Lukàcs, when it came to ultimate questions of personal conscience (73-5; 226-7).

Nizan's progressive entry into the novel is frequently compared to Sartre's gradual rejection of this form as a means of effective expression, and leads Ishaghpour to conclude that Nizan's portrait of the hero evolves away from Lukàcs's typology, to coincide with Goldmann's formulation of subjectivity in the novel of post-liberal capitalism: circumscribed by the oppressive world of commodity fetishism and the inability to derive meaning in the face of death, subjectivity can no longer seek refuge in the epic world of universal values; instead, the fragmented hero must force himself to deal with the particular and engage in the battle, on the one hand, against the many faces of death and, on the other, against the domination of *homo oeconomicus* (34-7 *et passim*).

In Nizan's conception of the particular and the concrete — which was also the main reason for early Sartre's attraction to Nizan — Ishaghpour locates the key to his subsequent misreading of Marx. Nizan's Marxism, filtered through Sorel and mostly via Kojève, focuses on "concrete" reality and proletarian "action" in a way that emasculates praxis entirely from its (Marxian) relationship to "theory," "philosophy," "categories" and the "force of abstraction." Nizan's simplistic, a-historical separation of thought from action and his distortion of "abstract labor" aimed at an emphatic glorification of proletarian work and toil in the name of "concrete," "sensuous" labor. Its inevitable result was a string of further abuses with respect to fundamental Marxist ideas. Alienation, the dialectic of freedom and necessity, as well as the relationship between human needs and the historicity of nature turn into flat, irreconcilable opposites that strip Nizan's problematic of all socio-historical validity (69-75; 89-92; 155-170). The rejection of all philosophy as an idealist mystification, guarded and propagated by bourgeois "watchdogs," is a highpoint in Nizan's distorted humanism and crude materialism: work and, implicitly, universal proletarianization become the only means for destroying "abstract labor" and theoretical babble. In this connection, Ishaghpour has little trouble convincing us of the short distance between Nizan's impoverished

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critique of ideology and Second Internationalist views that were later recycled in Althusser's dichotomy of Marxism and "philosophy" (55-65). And, to carry things one step further, it is no wonder that neo-irrationalist themes from *The Watchdogs* should have nurtured the aberrations of post-1968 groups of *nouveaux philosophes.*

It was not before 1938-39 (after the implications of the Soviet-German pact and the fall of Poland and Czechoslovakia became clear), that Nizan recognized the affirmative and necessary role of culture and criticism — crucial factors in his defection and dismissal (183ff; 225). All the same, what caught the imagination of 1968 and afterwards was the grotesque doctrinairism of *The Watchdogs*: "proletarians don't read," notes Nizan; "so much the better," he adds, since "they won't be corrupted"! (82). All of which simply compounds the irony of the fact that Nizan's militancy never overstepped the boundaries of literature. In truth, the "myth" of Nizan built by Sartre — at Sartre's expense, adds Ishaghpour (247) — was essentially underscoring Nizan's anguished vision and his ability to "decondition" language and use it "like a weapon."[1] A weapon that failed nonetheless, in Ishaghpour's view: "As long as the world has not been transformed and parties still exist," he says, "the writer committed to a party will always remain suspect in the eyes of that party. Moreover, he will also remain suspect with respect to literature for having placed it at the service of something real." This was Nizan's "double infidelity" which circumscribes the scope and efficacity of committed literature as a whole (236). In contrast, argues Ishaghpour, Sartre, who abandoned the novel, was the only writer to realize and go beyond the limits of such commitment: "in his marvellous texts on Mallarmé and Falubert, Sartre showed that the (negative) social and implicit content of "Art for Art's sake" is far richer than the showy and optimistic content of many "works of art" that cover up their emptiness by brandishing their commitment" (236).

Paul Nizan is a balanced, warm and well-written study, clearly indebted to Goldmann's sociology of literature. But when it comes to a final appraisal, Ishaghpour never gives a thought to Goldmann's generally guarded views regarding Sartre's achievement. In his closing statement, poignant — if somewhat defiant — he seems clearly compelled to make a choice worth citing in full: "With Sartre and Nizan, commitment was undoubtedly to reach its two most extreme expressions. Nizan had longed to "melt" into the people and instead ended up rediscovering literature.... Sartre, who had sought salvation in literature, was shaken by the compact presence of masses at his horizon, but did not abandon the universe of discourse and this is where he proved most effective. In his case, the presence of the masses resulted in the radical destruction of literature. The only masterpieces of committed literature will be his own, because he did not oppose, in the name of the "concrete," discourse with refusal pure and simple but, instead, introduced politics in his own domain, thus bringing poetry and myth into reflection: with his *L'Engagement de Mallarmé, The Words, L'Idiot de la famille* and the phenomenological, existential and historical understanding of the passion for literature, Sartre has, at the same time, demythified and recovered "Art for Art's sake," thereby also realizing the ultimate moment of its decline."

Eleni Mahaira-Odoni

1. Jean-Paul Sartre, "*La Conspiration*, par Paul Nizan" (1938), in *Critiques Littéraires (Situations, I)*, (Paris: Gallimard, 1975), p. 37.

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